STATE OF THE GAME: OUR EXCLUSIVE DIVISION-BY-DIVISION REPORT

THE BIBLE OF BOXING

# The RING®

# PACQUIAO VS. BRADLEY

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# NEW RING CHAMPIONSHIP POLICY

By **Michael Rosenthal**

The fact that THE RING had championship vacancies in 11 of the 17 weight divisions at press time is stark evidence that the Nos. 1- and 2-rated fighters rarely face one another in the modern boxing era.

The goal of THE RING has always been to determine the true champion in every division. Clearly, the long-standing policy has not been effective at meeting this objective.

The editors at THE RING had two choices – do nothing, which would perpetuate the status quo, or take action.

After many long discussions, we decided to update our Championship Policy in an effort to encourage top fighters to face one another and create more championship fights while maintaining the high standards long associated with THE RING.

We didn't want to sit back and continue to say, in effect, "Oh, well. We can't force these guys to fight each other so there's nothing we can do."

We believe we've come up with a new policy that will pump more life into the sport and hopefully motivate the best to fight the best, which is what fans deserve.

Here's a look at the updated policy:

### NEW CHAMPIONSHIP POLICY

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways:

1. THE RING's Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another.
2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders choose not to fight one another and either of them fights No. 3, No. 4 or No. 5, the winner may be awarded THE RING belt.

### CHAMPIONSHIP RETENTION

THE RING also wants to encourage its champions to face worthy opponents. With that in mind, here are the six situations in which a champion can lose his belt:

1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion.
2. The Champion moves to another weight class.
3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months.
4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his championship weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight).
5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years.
6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Editors know that there is no such thing as a perfect Championship Policy but we feel strongly that our updated version is a step in the right direction.

*Follow Michael Rosenthal on Twitter @MichalRosenthal*

The RING

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**Danny Garcia** (left) had to earn his unanimous-decision victory over **Erik Morales** on March 24 in Houston, which gave the Philadelphian his first major title.

Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

**Michael Katsidis** (left) gave a typically spirited effort but came up short against **Ghanaian Albert Mensah** on April 13 in Las Vegas.

Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

**Arthur Abraham** (left) demonstrated in a one-sided decision over **Piotr Wilczewski** on March 31 in Germany that he still knows how to win.

Image: **Martin Rose-Bongarts-Getty Images**

**Brandon Rios** (left) and trainer **Robert Garcia** had reason to be concerned between rounds against **Richard Abril** but **Rios** pulled out a split-decision victory April 14 in Las Vegas.

Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

## THE RIOS-ABRIL DECISION

A number of readers objected to Brandon Rios' controversial split-decision victory over Richard Abril on April 14. Here are some of their thoughts.

## WOW

All I can say is wow. This has got to be one of the most disgusting robberies I have ever seen and this is coming from a Rios fan. This ranks up there with the Pernell Whitaker vs. Jose Ramirez decision. Also what makes me even more angry is that Rios had the audacity to celebrate. I don't know if I can root for Rios anymore. This is the second consecutive time he couldn't make weight and then he gets a boxing lesson and celebrates as if he dominated his opponent. Judges Jerry Roth and Glenn Trowbridge [who scored the fight for Rios] shouldn't be suspended; they should be thrown in jail.

*Israel Gomez*
*Denver*

## SICKENING

I don't think anybody could deny that Abril took Rios to school tonight in every aspect of the sport and the subsequent result was astonishing, sickening and emulsifying to boxing. I actually predicted the result on Twitter in the eighth round, which made me feel like crap because when repugnant boxing robberies like this one become predictable you know there's a poisonous and cataclysmic underlying problem eating away at the sport.

*Gavan Casey*
*Ireland*

## HURTS BOXING

Brandon Rios looked terrible in this one. He was sluggish and most of his punches were blocked. I don't understand what the hell the judges saw because Richard Abril dominated him. It wasn't even close. It just sucks because some fighters aren't getting what they deserve and results like this hurt boxing. Abril may not be entertaining to watch but he beat the guy fair and square.

*Jayson Belda*
*Philippines*

## TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

Michael Katsidis is as honest as the day is long both in and out of the ring. Surely he must realize that his best days are behind him. He took a bucket load of punishment in his majority-decision loss to Albert Mensah on April 13. He appears too small to be effective as a junior welterweight. As fun as he is to watch and as much as boxing needs a guy like Katsidis, I think now would be a good time for him to retire. He has had a solid career, been a fan favorite and hopefully made some good coin. I don't think Katsidis can garner the big money fights he was hoping a change to trainer Justin Fortune would provide. You have served yourself, your country and your sport well. Hold your head high, son, and say good bye.

*Chris Behan*
*Sydney, Australia*

## KUDOS TO PELTZ

As a long time boxing fan and subscriber to your fine magazine, I'd like to note the remarkable career of promoter J Russell Peltz of Philadelphia. His achievements from the past are more impressive than practically any other promoter. The legendary brawls at the Blue Horizon and the Spectrum will go down in history as classics. Fighters such as Bennie Briscoe, Tyrone Everett, Willie Monroe, Eugene Hart and Matthew Saad Muhammad dominated his shows back when a promoter had to actually sell tickets to make a living. On these credentials alone, his place in the International Boxing Hall of Fame is validated. In addition to this, Peltz's current stable of fighters includes Mike Jones, Teon Kennedy, Gabriel Rosado, Bryant Jennings and Ronald Cruz. Peltz builds these fighters from four-round preliminary bouts to 12-round championship bouts. Along the way, they are in competitive, action fights and never matched easy. I, along with others in the Philadelphia area, am privileged to experience all the action-packed bouts Russell can provide.

*Dan Ward*
*Springfield, Pa.*

### WRITE TO THE RING!

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The WBC maneuvered to make **Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.** its middleweight titleholder at the expense of **Sergio Martinez** (right, against **Matthew Macklin**). Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

# UNSANCTIONABLE OFFENSES

By: **David Greisman**

You need to understand why I'm here. I'll complain, criticize and grumble like a combination of Larry Merchant, Andy Rooney and Statler and Waldorf from *The Muppet Show*, all put together into one foul-tempered Frankenstein of fight writing. But even I understand my limits when it comes to the most Sisyphean tasks of this sweet science.

You won't hear me trying to convince James Toney to lose weight, to retire or even to enunciate. You won't find me attempting to get Ricardo Mayorga to delve into the finer points of Victorian literature. And you'll never see me arguing for the banishment of the sanctioning bodies solely in favor of the belt bestowed by this very publication.

That won't stop me from tearing into organizations that are more B.S. than they are 'BA 'BC, 'BF or 'BO. They won't just disappear if we simply ignore them. They are still too important to too many fighters. Witness how long Wladimir Klitschko has carried the fringe IBO title or how proudly a lesser-known fighter such as Raul Martinez refers not to his two times challenging for a major belt, but to the minor trinkets he held from the IBA and NABF.

It is because these bodies still hold such power – helping to make or break a fighter – that we must hold them responsible, calling them out on inconsistency, pressuring them forcefully on foul play.

Boxing has too much in common with prostitution. We need not get into the wordplay involving hooks and hookers. But both are trades of the flesh big in Nevada, where the young and fresh are more attractive and those past their primes are summarily disposed of. And, of course, no one is surprised when someone gets screwed.

***

The WBC schemed to make Erik Morales the first four-division world titleholder from Mexico.

The authorities overreacted to the missteps of **Dereck Chisora** (left), which occurred before and after his fight against **Vitali Klitschko**.

Image: **Alexander Hassenstein-Bongarts-Getty Images**

It did so at the expense of Ajose Olusegun, who has been made to wait longer than the media at a Roy Jones Jr. press conference.

The WBC schemed to keep Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. a middleweight beltholder. It did so at the expense of Sergio Martinez, who is the legitimate 160-pound champion yet is resigned to waiting for a fight that everyone already knows he will win.

Olusegun and Martinez take this abuse because they can't make as much money without the big names who hold the belts. Olusegun will now take aim at Danny Garcia, who defeated a Morales who cared so little about his WBC belt once he had it that he dropped that title at the scales. Martinez will hope for the winner of Chavez Jr. vs. Andy Lee.

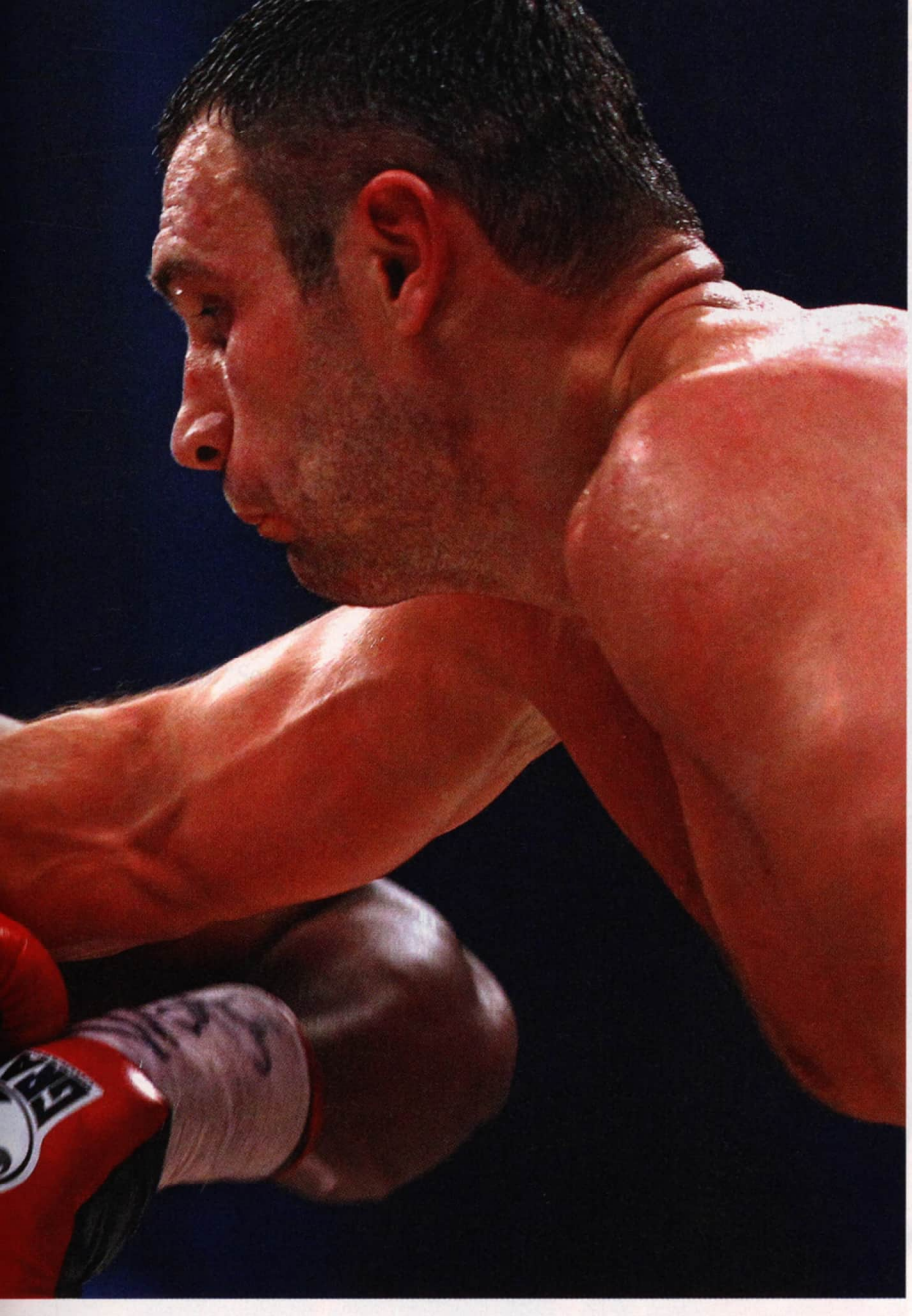
The best thing that ever happened toward the goal of holding sanctioning bodies responsible was when Graciano Rocchigiani sued the WBC. Yet the former light heavyweight titleholder settled with the sanctioning body, perhaps saving it from bankruptcy.

Money, after all, is all that matters. Olusegun could make more money against Garcia or Morales, and Martinez could make more money against Chavez. Neither could try to force those fights to happen without a WBC mandate. They've had to wait, and there's no guarantee that Garcia or Chavez won't drop their belts rather than make their defenses.

It's a gamble they felt was worth making. It's better to be in bed with the sanctioning bodies and get paid than it is to get screwed for free.

***

Consider the corruption that already pervades this dangerous en-



terprise. Consider the mismatches and the life-altering damage, the politics and the out-and-out crime.

If we're going to direct our energy to anything outside of what goes on between the ropes, it should be these. That's why the mock outrage over what Juan Manuel Lopez said after being knocked out again by Orlando Salido – and over what Dereck Chisora did before and after losing to Vitali Klitschko – makes a mockery of those in charge of the sport.

Lopez has been suspended for a year by the Puerto Rican boxing commission for implying that the reason Roberto Ramirez Sr. stopped the Salido rematch when he did was because the referee is a gambler. Chisora had his boxing license taken away from him in the United Kingdom for slapping and spitting on the Klitschko brothers, and for his post-fight press conference brawl with David Haye.

Neither of these incidents were the fighters' best moments. Neither of these injuries needed to be added on top of the insults.

The media and the fans are here to praise and to criticize, to applaud and to mock, to give leeway and to hold grudges. Lopez and Chisora were tried in the court of public opinion. Nothing else was necessary. The sanctioning bodies are there to provide a semblance of structure. Athletic commissions are there to maintain the integrity of the sport within the ring and to protect the safety of the fighters.

Chisora's actions were no worse than Floyd Mayweather Jr. choking Victor Ortiz, Bernard Hopkins brawling with Winky Wright or any of a multitude of Mike Tyson lowlights. Boxers have done much, much worse meanwhile in non-boxing settings, yet you never hear of athletic commissions or sanctioning bodies sticking to their moral convictions when it comes to criminal convictions.

Lopez's words, spoken post-stoppage, were promptly dissected and dismissed as coming from a fighter coming too soon from disappointment to speak without delusion. His excuses weren't excusable, but neither were they execrable.

It's not right when the American sports leagues penalize players and coaches for criticizing officials even if their critiques are correct. And it wasn't right to penalize Lopez, no matter how wrong he was, for a matter that was between him and the referee.

We tore into Ortiz for seemingly not caring about quitting against Marcos Maidana. We've torn into fighters for not showing up at press conferences to promote their fights even when said promoting brings contrived confrontations faker than pro wrestling. And we've torn into fighters who just show up for paychecks.

We want boxers to show passion and personality. They are damned if they don't – and, in the case of Lopez and Chisora – damned if they do. ■

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## JABS & STRAIGHT WRITES

By Thomas Hauser

# SOME WORDS OF WISDOM FROM GREAT FIGHTERS

**Jack Johnson:** "I learned from all my opponents. When I was in the ring, my opponent was a teacher."

**Benny Leonard:** "The toughest fighter to fight is a stupid fighter. When you feint him, he doesn't know you're doing it."

**Carmen Basilio:** "Some people have to learn everything the hard way. That's me. I learn hard, but I learn good."

**Billy Conn:** "I fought Fritzie Zivic when I was 18 years old, 10 rounds in Duquesne Garden [in Pittsburgh]. He was a real experienced fighter. Fighting fellows like that is how you learn to box. That was like going to college for five years, just boxing him."

**Carmen Basilio** (right) learned hard but good. Image: **THE RING**

## QUICK QUIZ

1. Jack Dempsey was knocked out only once in his 78-bout career. Who did it?

2. THE RING Magazine has designated a "Fighter of the Year" every year since 1928 with one exception. When was the award not given?

3. How old was Mike Tyson when he lost his title to James "Buster" Douglas?

A young **Mike Tyson** is pictured at the weigh-in for the fight that followed his loss to **Buster Douglas.** Image: **Aryeh Rabinovich-AFP-Getty Images**

# NOT-SO-INSPIRED CHOICES

Stung by criticism that WBC officials are doing a lousy job, WBC President Jose Sulaiman announced on March 15 that the WBC has created a ring officials supervision committee. The committee will be headed by 83-year-old Tom Kaczmarek, who last judged a fight three years ago. The other judges on the panel are Ken Morita (who had Mike Tyson leading Buster Douglas in Tokyo when Iron Mike was knocked out), Larry O'Connell (who scored Lewis-Holyfield I a draw), and Angelo Poletti (whose scorecard in Leonard-Duran I read three rounds for Duran, two rounds for Leonard and 10 rounds even).

Any questions?

Who is going to supervise **Jose Sulaiman's** supervisors? Image: **Chris Cozzone-Fightwireimages**

Hall of Fame matchmaker **Bruce Trampler** apparently had hops. Image: **Jeff Julian-Fightwireimages**

# BRUCE TRAMPLER AND BRAD GOODMAN REMEMBER THEIR GREATEST MOMENTS IN SPORTS ... OUTSIDE OF BOXING

Top Rank has two matchmakers who are among the best ever. Recently, each of them reflected on a memorable sports moment away from the boxing scene.

## BRUCE TRAMPLER

It was a 4th of July track and field meet sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce or some group like that at Memorial Park in my home town [Maplewood, N.J.]. There were no teams. It was just individual entries. I think I was 13 years old. Ten or twelve of us were entered in the high jump competition.

I was a scissors-style jumper. The Fosbury Flop was way in the future. I lined up, got ready to make my approach to the bar and saw my father standing there watching. I hadn't known he was coming. In fact, I don't think I'd known he was aware of the meet. We had an OK relationship, but it was pretty distant. It made me feel good seeing him there. It was one of those moments like you had in *The Natural*, when Robert Redford looks into the stands and sees Glenn Close. Not really; but you get the point.

Then I focused on the bar and how many steps there were in my approach and cleared 5-4 or 5-6 or whatever it was and won the competition. It wasn't that I was good. I

wasn't. I was just better than the rest of the field. They gave me a little medal attached to a red-white-and-blue ribbon, which I still have, although I'm not sure where it is right now.

**BRAD GOODMAN**

I played ball lot when I was a kid; mostly baseball and football. When I got into my 30s, I turned to softball. I was a solid player, not great. I was playing for a team in a league in Queens [a borough of New York City] called The Bulls. We played every Sunday. This was a game we had to win to make the playoffs. The score was tied in the sixth inning. There were two outs and the other team had men on second and third base. The batter hit a shot to right field. I went to my left and made a diving catch. The next inning, we scored two runs and won the game.

My father was dying of cancer at the time. He liked watching me play, but he couldn't come to any of the playoff games because he was in hospice care by then. If your team won the championship, you got a jacket. I'd never won any kind of championship before. I'd always come up short. I can't tell you how badly I wanted to win this championship for him.

And we won. But it took a while to get the jacket. You had to order it and wait, and it didn't come until right after my father died. I remember the day it came. It was raining. I brought the jacket over to the funeral home and asked them to put it on my father. Then I put a letter in the coffin, telling him I loved him, and walked home in the rain.

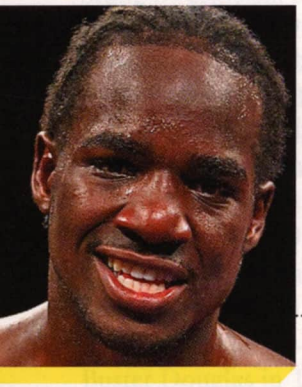
Our very own **Lem Satterfield** has produced more than just thousands of quality boxing stories over his long journalism career. He also has a daughter who happens to have a beautiful singing voice. **Ada Satterfield** has sung the national anthem before a number of big fights, including the **Lamont Peterson-Amir Khan** fight Dec. 10 in Washington, D.C. And she always knocks 'em out. Image: **Tom Hogan-Hoganphotos**

***QUIZ ANSWERS:*** **1.** Fireman Jim Flynn KO'd Dempsey in the first round on Feb. 13, 1917. **2.** In 1966, the editors of THE RING decreed that Muhammad Ali deserved the award on the basis of his boxing performances, but that his conduct out of the ring was such that he should not be held up as a role model for the youth of America. **3.** Tyson was only 23 when he lost to Douglas in 1990.

**Thomas Hauser** can be reached by email at **thauser@rcn.com**. His most recent book (*Winks and Daggers: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing*) was published by the University of Arkansas Press.

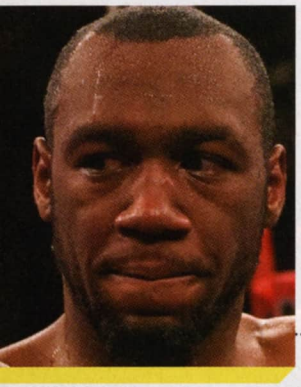
# FIGHTERS' FAVORITES

THE REGULAR RING FEATURE "PLAYLIST" HAS EVOLVED INTO "FIGHTERS' FAVORITES," WHICH INCLUDES NOT ONLY SELECTED BOXERS' MUSIC OF CHOICE BUT ALSO THEIR FAVORITES IN SIX OTHER CATEGORIES.



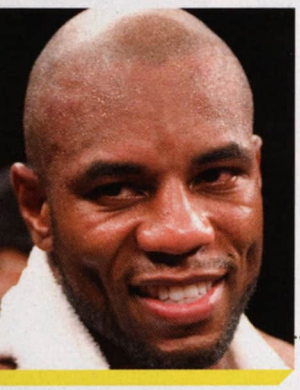
## FERNANDO GUERRERO

**MUSIC:** Romeo Santos
**CAR:** Corvette
**FOOD:** Dominican (rice and beans and chicken)
**TATOO(S):** No
**ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING):** Michael Jordan
**MOVIE:** *Gladiator*
**VIDEO GAME:** *God of War*



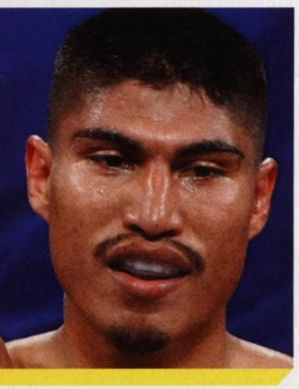
## AUSTIN TROUT

**MUSIC:** Jay-Z
**CAR:** Cadillac
**FOOD:** Italian
**TATOO(S):** Yes
**ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING):** Barry Sanders, Hershel Walker
**MOVIE:** *Usual Suspects*
**VIDEO GAME:** *Call of Duty, Modern Warfare III*



## SETH MITCHELL

**MUSIC:** All types of music, R&B and Rap (Jay-Z)
**CAR:** Dodge Magnum
**FOOD:** Seafood (crab, lobster, shrimp)
**TATOO(S):** Yes
**ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING):** Ray Lewis
**MOVIE:** *Gladiator, Tombstone, Braveheart, The Bodyguard*
**VIDEO GAME:** Don't play

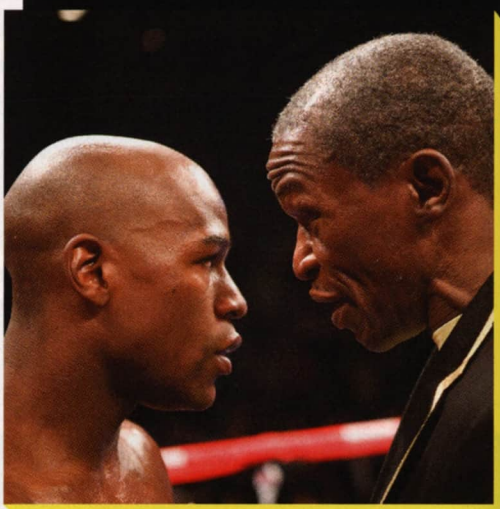


## MIKEY GARCIA

**MUSIC:** Joan Sebastian, Geraldo Ortiz
**CAR:** Dodge Champion, SRT 8 ("It's a Challenger. I changed the name to Dodge Champion. I figure, 'What's above a challenger? A champion.'")
**FOOD:** Mexican
**TATOO(S):** No
**ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING):** Floyd Mayweather Jr. ("I don't have a favorite outside boxing.")
**MOVIE:** *Saving Private Ryan*
**VIDEO GAME:** *Fight Night*, all boxing games

## 10 A MONTHLY BOXING LIST

***THIS MONTH:*** FAMILIES WITH AT LEAST THREE PROFESSIONAL FIGHTERS, INCLUDING THEIR COMBINED RECORDS. IN ORDER OF VICTORIES.



**1. 277-167-30:** ZIVIC (FRITZIE, JACK, PETE AND EDDIE)

**2. 202-31-5:** YAROSZ (TEDDY, TOMMY, JOEY AND EDDIE)

**3. 183-11-4:** CHAVEZ (JULIO CESAR SR., RODOLFO, JULIO CESAR JR. AND OMAR)

**4. 181-32-4:** HILTON (DAVE SR., DAVE JR., MATTHEW, ALEX AND STEWART)

**5. 161-29-6: MAYWEATHER** (FLOYD SR., ROGER, JEFF AND FLOYD JR.)

**6. 142-70-12:** MAGRAMO (RIC, RIC JR., RONNIE AND MELVIN)

**7. 129-31-10:** FULLMER (GENE, DON AND JAY)

**8. 124-34-12:** QUARRY (JERRY, MIKE AND BOBBY)

**9. 121-31-11:** PENALOSA (CARL, DAVE, DODIE BOY, GERRY, JONATHAN AND DODIE BOY JR.)

**10. 115-28-4:** SPINKS (LEON, MICHAEL, CORY, DARRELL, LEON CALVIN AND TOMMY)

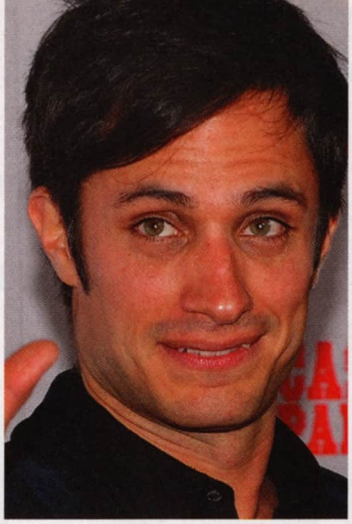
**SOURCE:** BOXREC.COM

***NOTE:*** *THIS LIST DOESN'T INCLUDE ALL FAMILIES WITH THREE OR MORE PROFESSIONAL FIGHTERS.*

# GOOD, BAD, WORSE

THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH

By: **Michael Rosenthal**



Actor **Gael Garcia Bernal** will portray **Roberto Duran** in an upcoming film. Images: **Getty Images**

## GOOD

We love boxing movies. We love Roberto Duran. The combination could be special. Filming reportedly is about to begin for *Hands of Stone*, a biopic about the great lightweight from Panama. Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal will play Duran and Robert DeNiro will play trainer Ray Arcel, who worked with Duran for part of his career. Let's hope writer/director/producer Jonathan Jakubowicz can pull it off.

## BAD

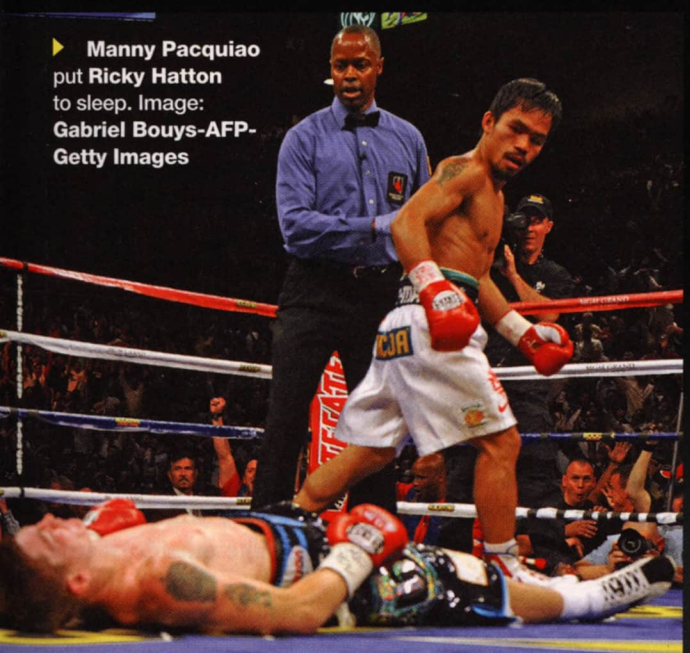
Mike Tyson has done a remarkable job reinventing himself in retirement. The former heavyweight champ has evolved from an often-vile rogue into someone who is trying to be a good citizen. And then came his comments about the tragic case of Trayvon Martin, the 17-year-old who was killed by George Zimmerman. "The fact that (Zimmerman) hasn't been shot yet is a disgrace," Tyson said before charges were filed against Zimmerman. That was the old Tyson.

## WORSE

The death of Indonesian boxer Muhammad Afrizal from a brain injury on April 4 was little more than a footnote in the news of that day. However, every death in boxing gives me pause. I think about the fighter and those close to him. Afrizal, only 30, reportedly was due to be married soon. And I think about the courage of every man and woman who steps through the ropes to do battle. I will always admire them. Rest in peace, Muhammad.

# RING POLL

A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS. THIS MONTH: WHAT IS THE GREATEST PERFORMANCE IN MANNY PACQUIAO'S CAREER THUS FAR?



**Manny Pacquiao** put **Ricky Hatton** to sleep. Image: **Gabriel Bouys-AFP-Getty Images**

### THE PERCENTAGES:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| RICKY HATTON | KO 2 | 29.5 |
| MIGUEL COTTO | KO 12 | 26.4 |
| OSCAR DE LA HOYA | KO 8 | 16.1 |
| MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA | KO 11 | 13.2 |
| ERIK MORALES II | KO 10 | 6.8 |
| ERIK MORALES III | KO 3 | 3.7 |
| OTHER | | 2.7 |
| LEHLO LEDWABA | KO 6 | 1.5 |

***NOTE:** 6,391 READERS VOTED IN THE POLL.*

# ROBERT GARCIA

By **Lem Satterfield**

Robert Garcia has emerged over the past few years as one of the top young trainers in boxing. His growing list of protégés includes Nonito Donaire, Brandon Rios, Marcos Maidana, Kelly Pavlik, Antonio Margarito and younger brother Mikey Garcia.

Fans might not know that he was an elite fighter during his boxing career, in which he held the IBF junior lightweight title and compiled a record of 35-3 (25 knockouts). He didn't have tremendous power or quickness but he was a solid boxer-puncher who could give almost anyone trouble.

Garcia fought a number of very good fighters. Among them: Joel Casamayor, Diego Corrales, Ben Tackie, John John Molina, Derrick Gainer and Ramon Ledon.

The fighter-turned-trainer recently revealed to THE RING which opponents were best in 10 key categories.

**STRONGEST: BEN TACKIE**

I would say that the strongest, physically, of the guys that I fought was Ben Tackie. He was just one of those fighters who was just so durable, physically, and strong that he kept coming and taking everything that I had. Just couldn't even move him with my punches. I landed everything and wasn't able to hurt him.

**SMARTEST: JOEL CASAMAYOR**

I would say that Joel Casamayor was pretty smart in the ring. In his prime, he was very clever, very slick. He knew what he was doing in there. Very technical and clever.

**BEST JAB: DERRICK GAINER**

I would say that Derrick Gainer had a very, very stiff jab and a good jab. He was very tall and moved around. So his jab was a key to his career. When I fought him, all that I did was stay inside and try to keep him on the ropes, but that fight was pretty hard. That wasn't easy. It was a close decision that I won, but he moved around and used his jab a lot.

**BEST CHIN: TACKIE AND JOHN JOHN MOLINA**

I would say it's close. They took everything that I had and would almost laugh at it. But I would still give Tackie the edge over Molina.

**FASTEST FEET: CASAMAYOR**

I think Joel Casamayor. He was a great amateur with so much experience that he knew how to scoot around and use the ring and use his feet. Not only with me, but with many of his opponents where he displayed a lot of great footwork.

**FASTEST HANDS: CASAMAYOR**

I would have to say that's Casamayor again. He was a Cuban gold medalist who was just very, very fast. He was very effective with his speed.

**BEST DEFENSE: GAINER**

The fight with me, when he was able to fight on the outside, it was

**Robert Garcia** (right) said the late **Diego Corrales** was the best overall fighter he ever faced.

Image: **Al Bello-Getty Images**

very hard to connect on him because of his height and his reach and a lot of holding, so that made it a lot more difficult and a lot harder for me to land a lot of punches.

**BEST PUNCHER: RAMON LEDON**

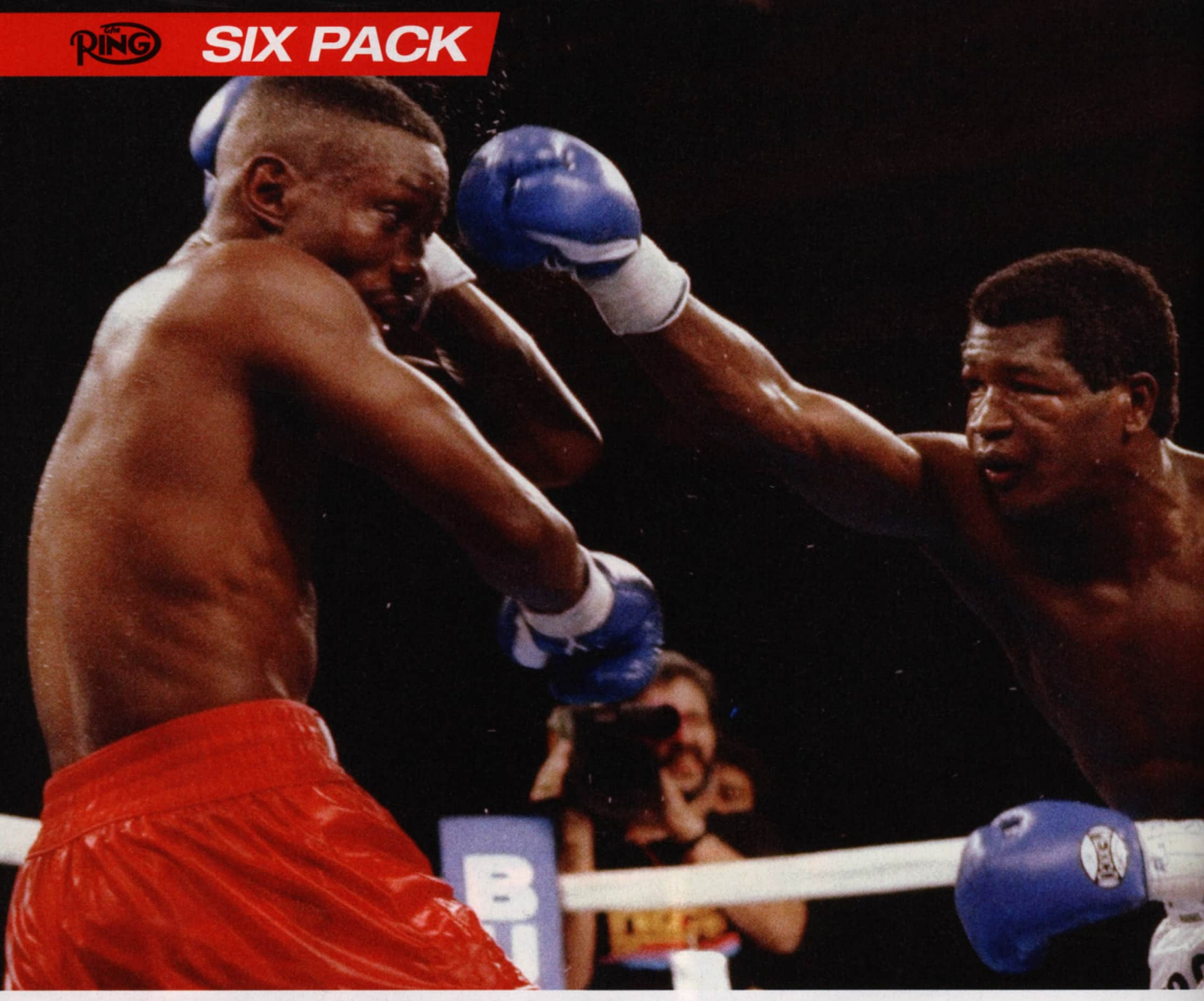
He knocked me down once and I knocked him down twice. He got me with a straight left that hurt me really, really badly. I know that Diego Corrales caught me with a good punch and the referee stopped the fight, but when the referee did that, I was still aware of everything that was going on and I could see everything. But with Ledon, I was out of it. I got up, but that really did hurt me.

**BEST BOXER: GAINER**

He was just very difficult. I couldn't always hit him cleanly. It wasn't my best night, and I got the win, but he was a very good boxer from the outside. Tough, tough fight with Derrick Gainer. He boxed smart. Every time I would get in, he would find a way to either hold me or to move his feet. It was close. Gainer did a good job of avoiding getting hit. I didn't hit him that much because I just couldn't.

**BEST OVERALL: DIEGO CORRAIES**

When you talk about who did the most with his career, I would have to say Corrales, because he came back and he beat Casamayor and he beat Jose Luis Castillo. He had a great career as a boxer, fighting one of the greatest fights ever with Castillo. Fighting guys like Floyd Mayweather. ■



# SHOT OR NOT?

By **T.K. Stewart**

In boxing, there are young fighters who are considered old for their age while others who may be older chronologically are considered young. Wear and tear is a significant contributing factor in the longevity of careers and the long term health and well-being of those who practice the sweet science. However, it is often difficult to gauge just where a fighter resides in the delicate continuum of a career.

Certainly those fighters who have learned the art and craft of self defense fare much better and have much longer careers than those who concentrate more on offense. One only needs to examine fighters such as Archie Moore, Bernard Hopkins, Mike McCallum, Pernell Whitaker and even Floyd Mayweather Jr. to recognize pugilists with the ability to avoid, slip and slide away from punches as the ones who have also enjoyed long careers with little obvious wear and tear.

Defensive technicians can fight actively at the championship level well into their forties – ages at which others have long ago hung up the gloves. They use all of their accumulated ring knowledge and savvy to preserve themselves and survive in the squared circle even after their reflexes have dulled. Meanwhile, those who

▶ The great **Pernell Whitaker** (left, against **Rafael Pineda** in 1992) had a long career in part because of his ability to slip and block punches.

Image: **Holly Stein-Allsports-Getty Images**

take more punches and are not as adept at avoiding punches seem to have little staying power; akin to shooting stars, they are bright while they streak across the galaxy but often burn out in a flash.

"It's impossible for a fighter to go through a career without getting hit and hit a lot," says famed trainer Nacho Beristain, who currently trains Juan Manuel Marquez, a fighter who has been a professional for 19 years and at age 38 is ranked in the Top 10 pound-for-pound. "However, some fighters get hit more solidly, more frequently than others. Some have a unique talent that is almost innate, but it can be taught and learned, to be able to slip and catch and roll with punches. Roberto Duran was excellent at rolling with the force of a blow, and he had a career that lasted over thirty years."

The belief in boxing is that the fellows who are a little more reckless have shorter careers because they suffer from the accumulated wear and tear on their bodies. They may not lose more often than they win, they may not even get knocked out, but they pay a price. They get banged up more frequently with punches and head butts. And when they swing they are hitting elbows and the top of the head, and as a result they suffer more frequent hand and soft-tissue injuries. Those little injuries add up over the course of a career.

"I've always believed that each fighter only has so many fights in him," said Emmanuel Steward. "So one person may be able to fight 50 times and show no signs of wear and tear or of being shot. Another guy, though, fights 30 times and is done for. It's just whatever an individual is able to take. Some can take more than others."

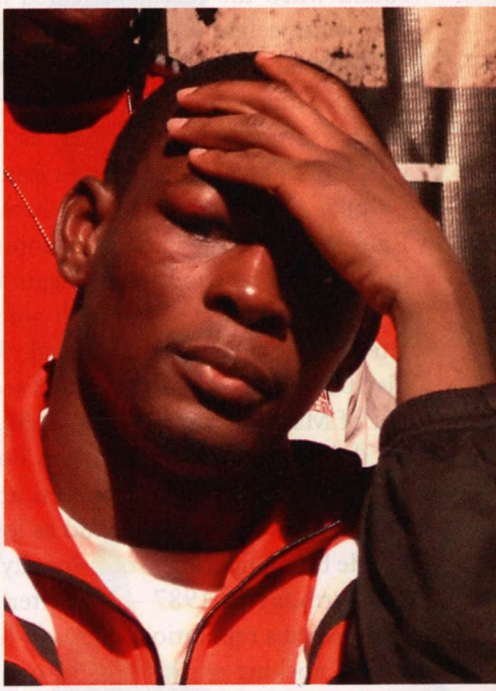
While that may seem a simplistic viewpoint there does seem to be some merit in the argument. A fighter such as Jermain Taylor was perceived by many to be a "shot" fighter at age 31 after successive knockout losses to Carl Froch and Arthur Abraham. Taylor had only fought 33 times in a career that to that point was only eight years in length.

Taylor is now on the comeback trail but it remains to be seen whether he can shake the label of being a shot fighter. Other fighters such as Davey Moore, Meldrick Taylor and David Reid all suffered similar meltdowns early in their careers and were never able to enjoy long-term success. They were all affixed with the "shot" label while still in their 20s.

The term "shot fighter" generally refers to boxers who have lost their ability to take a punch and endure the rigors of a demanding bout, and who often lose where they were previously able to triumph. There is no single test to identify a shot fighter and not everyone agrees when a fighter is beyond his best.

Some in boxing's medical community tend to agree with Steward's assessment. Dr. Robert C. Gambrell, who practices Sports Medicine in Augusta, Ga., has written on the topic of medical care in boxing and believes that "a genetic predisposition may also exist in some individuals" that makes them more susceptible to wear and tear and damage. "Defining a specific measure of trauma that leads to injury is difficult, but increased exposure to repeated blows to the head appears to be the greatest risk," said Gambrell. "Risk factors of increased exposure include boxing longer than 10 years, increased sparring exposure, a history of knockout or technical knockout, poor performance, or being a boxer that is difficult to knock out."

In other words, there are myriad factors that determine the length of a boxing career. That's why fighters in their mid- and upper thirties such as Wladimir Klitschko, Sergio Martinez and Floyd Mayweather Jr. are considered young, while younger fighters such as Jermain Taylor, Paul Williams and Arthur Abraham are viewed as old. ■



▶ **Jermain Taylor** appears to be an old 33. Image: **Jeff Julian-Fightwireimages**

**Yory Boy Campas** (left) has more victories (100) than all but a few active boxers have fights. Image: **Chris Cozzone-Fightwireimages**

# A RARE MILESTONE

By **THE RING**

For a moment it seemed as if Luis Ramon Campas might become a star.

"Yory Boy," as he is known, landed a left hook that traveled about the length of this page but packed the power to put down Felix Trinidad in the second round when the then-undefeated fighters met for the IBF welterweight title on Sept. 17, 1994.

The man who some had called "the next Julio Cesar Chavez" looked ready to finally accept the position.

It was not to be, however, as Trinidad would get up and hammer Campas into a fourth-round stoppage. Campas would go on to win a major title, stopping Raul Marquez to win the IBF junior middleweight belt in 1997, but he would never again flirt with greatness.

Campas *would* accomplish something many years later that few could've imagined, though: He notched his 100th professional win with a second-round knockout of Mauro Lucero on March 30 in Navojoa, Mexico, the town where Campas was born in 1971.

Few fighters these days even approach 100 fights. Few fighters also stick around as long as Campas.

He began fighting professionally a month before his 16th birthday in 1987 – a quarter century ago – and established a reputation for heavy-handedness immediately, knocking out his first 13 opponents. From there he built a record that stood at 56-0 (50 KOs) when he fought Trinidad.

Matchmaker Don Chargin, who handled Campas at different points in his career, described him as a favorite with fans.

"(Campas) was an action fighter who could really punch," said Chargin. "He had that devastating left hook. People took to him."

Campas successfully defended the belt he won by beating Marquez three times before losing it to Fernando Vargas a year later. He lost two more attempts at major belts after that, to Daniel Santos in 2002 (KO 11) and Oscar De La Hoya in 2003 (KO 7).

After the loss to De La Hoya, Campas took the longest break of his pro career, nearly 11 months. He was still only 31, but his record stood at 80-6. One has to wonder what motivated his decision to continue at that point. After all, the mark of 100 wins in today's world can seem almost ... pathological. Perhaps he fixated on "100" as a way to claim that long–elusive spot next to Chavez (who retired with 107 wins). Maybe, sadly, he needs the money. His later career has been marked by lawsuits and allegations of fraud against promoters.

Or maybe he just doesn't want to stop. Explaining why Campas fought so often to begin with, Chargin said simply, "he always said he'd rather fight than be in the gym."

Campas is 40 years old and his record is 100-16-1 (79 KOs). Will he keep going?

Said Chargin: "It wouldn't surprise me." ■

## MOST VICTORIES

**YORY BOY CAMPAS' 100 VICTORIES ARE REMARKABLE BY TODAY'S STANDARDS BUT PALE NEXT TO MANY FIGHTERS FROM THE PAST. HERE IS A LIST OF THOSE WITH THE MOST PROFESSIONAL VICTORIES.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **338** | LEN WICKWAR | (1928-47) |
| **261** | (157 ND) HARRY GREB | (1913-26) |
| **259** | (34 ND) WILDCAT MONTE | (1923-37) |
| **254** | (31 ND) YOUNG STRIBLING | (1921-33) |
| **238** | (134 ND) JACK BRITTON | (1904-30) |
| **235** | BILLY BIRD | (1920-50) |
| **233** | (40 ND) TED KID LEWIS | 1909-29) |
| **229** | WILLIE PEP | (1940-66) |
| **222** | (15 ND) MAXIE ROSENBLOOM | (1923-39) |
| **210** | (7 ND) FREDDIE MILLER | (1927-40) |
| **208** | (29 ND) SAM LANGFORD | (1902-26) |
| **199** | (116 ND) JOHNNY DUNDEE | (1910-32) |
| **196** | (126 ND) BATTLING LEVINSKY | (1910-30) |
| **193** | GEORGE ROSE | (1926-37) |
| **192** | KID AZTECA | (1929-61) |

**SOURCE:** BOXREC.COM

***NOTE:** THE VICTORY TOTALS INCLUDE UNOFFICIAL "NEWSPAPER DECISIONS" (DESIGNATED ND), WHICH WERE COMMONPLACE WHEN OFFICIAL DECISIONS WERE OUTLAWED EARLY IN THE 20TH CENTURY.*

# HOLD THE NUDITY

By **Brian Harty**

Fortunately, **Mike Tyson** turned out to be speaking metaphorically when he promised he would get naked in his one-man Las Vegas show, "Mike Tyson: Undisputed Truth," which opened on April 13 for a limited run. The enigmatic former heavyweight champion began by telling the audience, "I'm doing this show so you guys better understand me," and then over the course of two-plus hours broached every topic from his rape conviction to the tattoo on his face. Rehearsals must have put Tyson in a talkative mood, as the quotes were flying from a multitude of sources throughout the first half of the month. Discussing the **Klitschko brothers** with the *Los Angeles Times*, he said, "Americans don't like this stuff. ... We relate to the downtrodden. We don't like the professor." At Examiner.com he offered a commentary on **Dereck Chisora's** post-fight brawl with **David Haye**: "They've got to do a bit more to get down to the level I was at." And on Huffingtonpost.com, he gave his opinion of slain Florida teenager **Trayvon Martin's** shooter, **George Zimmerman**: "Forget about him being arrested – the fact that he hasn't been shot yet is a disgrace." Is there such a thing as too much "naked"? ...

A second man was convicted for his role in the murder of **Vernon Forrest**, which occurred in the summer of 2009 when the 38-year-old boxer stopped at a gas station in Atlanta to put air in his tires and was shot multiple times as he was being robbed. **Jquante Crews**, 28, got life plus 10 years for driving the getaway car. He joins **Damario Ware**, who had already received a similar sentence for his role in the crime. Prosecutors reportedly are seeking the death penalty against a third suspect, **Charmon Sinkfield**, who allegedly pulled the trigger. ...

*Hands of Stone*, a movie depicting the life of Panamanian hurt-machine **Roberto Duran** – universally accepted as one of the baddest men ever to enter the ring – will begin shooting this summer in Puerto Rico. "Manos de Piedra" will be played by Mexican actor **Gael Garcia Bernal**, the role of **Sugar Ray Leonard** will be attempted by singer **Usher**, and Duran's trainer, **Ray Arcel**, will be portrayed by **Robert De Niro**. ...

Epix announced that it would televise the title fight between super middleweights **Carl Froch** and **Lucian Bute** on the jumbotron in New York's Times Square, just a few blocks from the corporate headquarters of HBO and Showtime, which both turned down the opportunity to air the matchup. Passers-by will see Bute in his first fight as a Canadian citizen – the native of Romania pledged his allegiance in late March during a ceremony that included a rousing group rendition of "O Canada." ■

**Mike Tyson** obviously enjoyed his one-man show at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Image: **John Gurzinski-AFP-Getty Images**

**Height:** 5-foot-7
**Weight:** 120 pounds
**Measurements:** 35-23-36
**Stance:** Orthodox
**Reach:** 24 inches
**Favorite Boxer:** Manny Pacquiao
**Current Location:** Florida
**Where you've seen her:** *FightTime* on SunSports Channel, Heavyweight Boxing Factory Ring Girl on Showtime and HBO, Miss Tropic Beauty World Finalist, "Sunless Situation" Model, MMACandy Model
**Booking Info:**
JuliaYmanova@yahoo.com or JuliaYmanova.com/bookings

PHOTO: **KADEN NGUYEN**

# JULIA YMANOVA

THE RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH BY: **HEATHER SHANHOLTZ**

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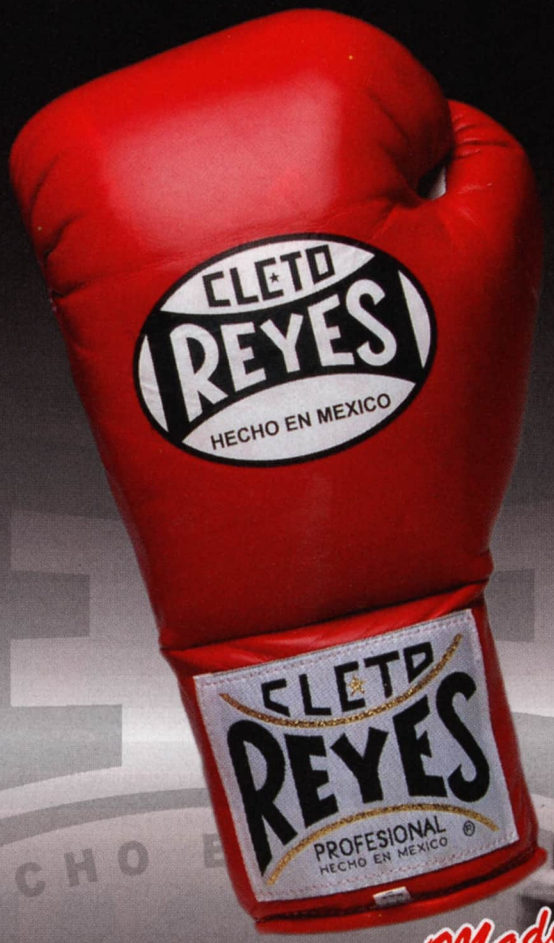


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**Danny Garcia** (right) beat a legend in **Erik Morales** to win his first major title. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

## FIGHTER OF THE MONTH:

# DANNY GARCIA

By **Michael Rosenthal**

Danny Garcia didn't dazzle us during his unanimous-decision victory over Erik Morales to win his first major title on March 24 in Houston.

The 24-year-old Philadelphian, a counterpuncher by nature, probably could've made it an easier fight if he were more aggressive. Morales was vulnerable. And Garcia throws too many wide punches, a bad habit that Morales mocked during the fight.

Clearly, the new WBC junior welterweight titleholder has a lot of room to grow.

That said, this is the bottom line: A brave young fighter with limited experience took down a legend who until their fight seemed to have quite a bit left in the tank.

Garcia didn't turn in a pretty performance but won 117-110, 116-112 and 118-109 on the scorecards, which is a convincing victory. He also put an exclamation point on the night by putting Morales down in the 11th round, leaving no doubt that this was his night.

Indeed, Garcia should be proud of his accomplishment.

And, obviously, he's just getting started. He will have savored the victory only for a short time before getting back into the gym, where he and trainer/father Angel Garcia can work together to build an even better fighter.

The guess here is that we've only gotten a glimpse of what Garcia can do. There very likely are more important victories ahead. ■

**POUND FOR POUND:** No change.

**HEAVYWEIGHTS:** No change.

**CRUISERWEIGHTS:** No change.

**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS:** No change.

**SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS:** No change.

**MIDDLEWEIGHTS:** Felix Sturm (No. 2 last month) switched places with Daniel Geale (No. 1 last month) after stopping fellow German Sebastian Zbik (No. 4 last month) in nine rounds.

**JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS:** Sergei Dzinziruk (No. 10 last month) dropped out because he hasn't fought in more than a year; Delvin Rodriguez stepped into the ratings to take his place.

**WELTERWEIGHTS:** No change.

**JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS:** Danny Garcia (No. 7 last month) rose to No. 4 after taking a unanimous decision and the WBC title from Erik Morales, who fell from No. 5 to No. 9. Meanwhile, Zab Judah (No. 6 last month) took care of Vernon Paris (No. 10 at the time) in nine rounds. Judah climbed to No. 5 while Paris was knocked off the list, leaving room for Humberto Soto to enter at No. 10. In the middle of all the shuffling, Lucas Matthysse (No. 4 last month) dropped to No. 6. Later, Juan Manuel Marquez entered at No. 8 after a one-sided decision over Sergei Fedchenko, which pushed Soto out of the ratings.

**LIGHTWEIGHTS:** The Editorial Board cleaned house in this division. Longtime champion Juan Manuel Marquez, No. 1 Brandon Rios and No. 2 Robert Guerrero were dropped because they are no longer lightweights. That left the championship vacant and lifted Antonio DeMarco (No. 3 last month) to No. 1. It also made room for Gavin Rees and Shariff Bogere to enter at Nos. 9 and 10. Meanwhile, Richard Abril (No. 9 last month) ascended to No. 7 after losing a controversial decision to Rios. And, earlier, Hank Lundy replaced Paulus Moses in the ratings after dominating Dannie Williams.

**JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS:** WBC titleholder Takahiro Ao (No. 5 last month) outpointed unrated Terdsak Kokietgym in Tokyo. Ao changed positions with Roman Martinez (No. 4 last month).

**FEATHERWEIGHTS:** Hozumi Hasegawa (unrated last month) replaced Rafael Marquez at No. 10 after stopping previously unbeaten Felipe Carlos Felix in seven rounds.

**JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS:** Jeffrey Mathebula (unrated last month) claimed the No. 6 spot after he took the IBF title from fellow South African Takalani Ndlovu (No. 6 last month) by a split decision. That pushed Ndlovu and those below down a notch and forced Wilfredo Vazquez Jr. (No. 10 last month) off the list. Then, Abner Mares left his No. 2 spot at bantamweight and entered the junior featherweight list at No. 7 after a dominant win over Eric Morel for the vacant WBC title. Masaaki Serie (No. 9 last month) dropped out.

**BANTAMWEIGHTS:** Shinsuke Yamanaka (No. 9 last month) retained his WBC title with a one-sided unanimous decision over Vic Darchinyan (No. 4 at the time) in Tokyo. They swapped rankings as a result, Yamanaka jumping to the No. 4 spot and Darchinyan plunging to No. 9, this being his second consecutive loss. Also, Yonnhy Perez (No. 6 last month) announced his retirement and was removed from the ratings. He was replaced by Leo Santa Cruz, who entered at No. 10. Finally, with Mares leaving the division for junior featherweight, everyone from No. 3 down moved up a space (except for Koki Kameda, who moved up two to get around Morel, who stayed put at No. 5 after his loss to Mares) and Hugo Ruiz entered at No. 10.

**JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS:** Yota Sato (No. 7 last month) outpointed Suriyan Sor Rungvisai (No. 2 last week) in Tokyo to win the WBC junior bantamweight title. Sato was elevated to No. 5 – behind Nos. 1-4 Omar Narvaez, Tomonobu Shimizu, Hugo Cazares and Tepparith Singwancha – while Sor Rungvisai dropped to No. 6. Later in the month, WBA titleholder Singwancha rose to No. 2 after a ninth-round stoppage of Shimizu, who fell to No. 6 and pushed Sato and Sor Rungvisai up a notch each. Cesar Seda (No. 9 last month) dropped out because he hadn't fought at 115 pounds in more than a year. Juan Alberto Rosas entered at No. 10.

**FLYWEIGHTS:** No change.

**JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS:** No change.

**STRAWWEIGHTS:** Katsunari Takayama (No. 8 last month) dropped to No. 10 after losing a unanimous decision in South Africa to Nkosinathi Joyi, who retained his No. 1 position. ■

**Richard Abril** (left) climbed the lightweight ratings because of a strong performance in defeat against **Brandon Rios** on April 14 in Las Vegas. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

## HEAVYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT UNLIMITED*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| C | **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** | Ukraine \| 57-3-0 (50 KOs) |
| 1. | **VITALI KLITSCHKO** | Ukraine \| 44-2-0 (40 KOs) |
| 2. | **ALEXANDER POVETKIN** | Russia \| 24-0-0 (16 KOs) |
| 3. | **TOMASZ ADAMEK** | Poland \| 45-2-0 (28 KOs) |
| 4. | **ALEXANDER DIMITRENKO** | Ukraine \| 32-1-0 (21 KOs) |
| 5. | **ROBERT HELENIUS** | Finland \| 17-0-0 (11 KOs) |
| 6. | **DENIS BOYTSOV** | Russia \| 31-0-0 (25 KOs) |
| 7. | **RUSLAN CHAGAEV** | Uzbekistan \| 29-2-1 (18 KOs) |
| 8. | **CHRIS ARREOLA** | U.S. \| 35-2-0 (30 KOs) |
| 9. | **KUBRAT PULEV** | Bulgaria \| 15-0-0 (7 KOs) |
| 10. | **TYSON FURY** | UK \| 18-0-0 (13 KOs) |

## CRUISERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| C | **YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ** | Cuba \| 26-1-0 (13 KOs) |
| 1. | **MARCO HUCK** | Germany \| 34-2-0 (25 KOs) |
| 2. | **KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK** | Poland \| 46-2-1 (33 KOs) |
| 3. | **STEVE CUNNINGHAM** | U.S. \| 24-4-0 (12 KOs) |
| 4. | **DENIS LEBEDEV** | Russia \| 24-1-0 (18 KOs) |
| 5. | **OLA AFOLABI** | UK \| 19-2-3 (9 KOs) |
| 6. | **ANTONIO TARVER** | U.S. \| 29-6-0 (20 KOs) |
| 7. | **GUILLERMO JONES** | Panama \| 38-3-2 (30 KOs) |
| 8. | **LATEEF KAYODE** | Nigeria \| 18-0-0 (14 KOs) |
| 9. | **GIACOBBE FRAGOMENI** | Italy \| 29-3-2 (12 KOs) |
| 10. | **MATEUSZ MASTERNAK** | Poland \| 26-0-0 (20 KOs) |

## LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| C | **BERNARD HOPKINS** | U.S. \| 52-5-2 (32 KOs) |
| 1. | **JEAN PASCAL** | Canada \| 26-2-1 (16 KOs) |
| 2. | **CHAD DAWSON** | U.S. \| 31-1-0 (17 KOs) |
| 3. | **TAVORIS CLOUD** | U.S. \| 24-0-0 (19 KOs) |
| 4. | **NATHAN CLEVERLY** | UK \| 24-0-0 (11 KOs) |
| 5. | **ADRIAN DIACONU** | Romania \| 27-3-0 (15 KOs) |
| 6. | **ZSOLT ERDEI** | Hungary \| 33-0-0 (18 KOs) |
| 7. | **GABRIEL CAMPILLO** | Spain \| 21-4-1 (8 KOs) |
| 8. | **BEIBUT SHUMENOV** | Kazakhstan \| 12-1-0 (8 KOs) |
| 9. | **KARO MURAT** | Germany \| 24-1-1 (14 KOs) |
| 10. | **ISMAYL SILLAKH** | Ukraine \| 17-0-0 (14 KOs) |

## SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| C | **ANDRE WARD** | U.S. \| 25-0-0 (13 KOs) |
| 1. | **LUCIAN BUTE** | Romania \| 30-0-0 (24 KOs) |
| 2. | **MIKKEL KESSLER** | Denmark \| 44-2-0 (33 KOs) |
| 3. | **CARL FROCH** | UK \| 28-2-0 (20 KOs) |
| 4. | **ROBERT STIEGLITZ** | Russia \| 41-2-0 (23 KOs) |
| 5. | **SAKIO BIKA** | Cameroon \| 29-5-2 (20 KOs) |
| 6. | **THOMAS OOSTHUIZEN** | South Africa \| 18-0-1 (13 KOs) |
| 7. | **GEORGE GROVES** | UK \| 14-0-0 (11 KOs) |
| 8. | **GLEN JOHNSON** | Jamaica \| 51-16-2 (35 KOs) |
| 9. | **ANDRE DIRRELL** | U.S. \| 20-1-0 (14 KOs) |
| 10. | **ARTHUR ABRAHAM** | Armenia \| 34-3-0 (27 KOs) |

## MIDDLEWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS*

C **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 49-2-2 (28 KOs)

1. **FELIX STURM**
Germany | 37-2-2 (16 KOs)
2. **DANIEL GEALE**
Australia | 27-1-0 (15 KOs)
3. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR.**
Mexico | 45-0-1 (31 KOs)
4. **DMITRY PIROG**
Russia | 19-0-0 (15 KOs)
5. **MATTHEW MACKLIN**
UK | 28-4-0 (19 KOs)
6. **HASSAN N'DAM N'JIKAM**
France | 26-0-0 (17 KOs)
7. **MARTIN MURRAY**
UK | 23-0-1 (10 KOs)
8. **GENNADY GOLOVKIN**
Kazakhstan | 22-0-0 (19 KOs)
9. **GRZEGORZ PROKSA**
Poland | 26-1-0 (19 KOs)
10. **SEBASTIAN ZBIK**
Germany | 30-2-0 (10 KOs)

## JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **MIGUEL COTTO**
Puerto Rico | 37-2-0 (30 KOs)
2. **SAUL ALVAREZ**
Mexico | 39-0-1 (29 KOs)
3. **VANES MARTIROSYAN**
U.S. | 32-0-0 (20 KOs)
4. **ERISLANDY LARA**
Cuba | 16-1-1 (11 KOs)
5. **CARLOS MOLINA**
Mexico | 19-4-2 (6 KOs)
6. **JAMES KIRKLAND**
U.S. | 30-1-0 (27 KOs)
7. **PAUL WILLIAMS**
U.S. | 41-2-0 (27 KOs)
8. **ALFREDO ANGULO**
Mexico | 20-2-0 (17 KOs)
9. **CORNELIUS BUNDRAGE**
U.S. | 31-4-0 (18 KOs)
10. **DELVIN RODRIGUEZ**
Dom. Republic | 26-5-3 (14 KOs)

## WELTERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines | 54-3-2 (38 KOs)
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 42-0-0 (26 KOs)
3. **VICTOR ORTIZ**
U.S. | 29-3-2 (22 KOs)
4. **ANDRE BERTO**
U.S. | 28-1-0 (22 KOs)
5. **KELL BROOK**
UK | 27-0-0 (18 KOs)
6. **VYACHESLAV SENCHENKO**
Ukraine | 32-0-0 (21 KOs)
7. **MIKE JONES**
U.S. | 26-0-0 (19 KOs)
8. **JAN ZAVECK**
Slovenia | 32-2-0 (18 KOs)
9. **SELCUK AYDIN**
Turkey | 23-0-0 (17 KOs)
10. **DEVON ALEXANDER**
U.S. | 23-1-0 (13 KOs)

## JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 28-0-0 (12 KOs)
2. **LAMONT PETERSON**
U.S. | 30-1-1 (15 KOs)
3. **AMIR KHAN**
UK | 26-2-0 (18 KOs)
4. **DANNY GARCIA**
U.S. | 23-0-0 (14 KOs)
5. **ZAB JUDAH**
U.S. | 42-7-0 (29 KOs)
6. **LUCAS MATTHYSSE**
Argentina | 30-2-0 (28 KOs)
7. **MIKE ALVARADO**
U.S. | 33-0-0 (23 KOs)
8. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 54-6-1 (39 KOs)
9. **MARCOS MAIDANA**
Argentina | 31-3-0 (28 KOs)
10. **ERIK MORALES**
Mexico | 52-8-0 (36 KOs)

## LIGHTWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **ANTONIO DEMARCO**
Mexico | 27-2-1 (20 KOs)
2. **MIGUEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico | 30-3-0 (13 KOs)
3. **RICKY BURNS**
UK | 34-2-0 (9 KOs)
4. **KEVIN MITCHELL**
UK | 33-1-0 (24 KOs)
5. **JOHN MURRAY**
UK | 31-2-0 (18 KOs)
6. **JOHN MOLINA**
U.S. | 23-1-0 (19 KOs)
7. **RICHARD ABRIL**
Cuba | 17-3-1 (8 KOs)
8. **HANK LUNDY**
U.S. 22-1-1 (11 KOs)
9. **GAVIN REES**
UK | 36-1-1 (17 KOs)
10. **SHARIF BOGERE**
Uganda | 22-0-0 (14 KOs)

## JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA**
Japan | 18-0-0 (15 KOs)
2. **JUAN CARLOS SALGADO**
Mexico | 24-1-1 (16 KOs)
3. **ADRIEN BRONER**
U.S. 23-0-0 (19 KOs)
4. **TAKAHIRO AO**
Japan | 23-2-1 (10 KOs)
5. **ROMAN MARTINEZ**
Puerto Rico | 25-1-1 (16 KOs)
6. **DIEGO MAGDALENO**
U.S. | 22-0-0 (8 KOs)
7. **ARGENIS MENDEZ**
Dom. Republic | 19-2-0 (10 KOs)
8. **JUAN CARLOS BURGOS**
Mexico | 29-1-0 (19 KOs)
9. **JORGE SOLIS**
Mexico | 40-4-2 (29 KOs)
10. **BRYAN VAZQUEZ**
Costa Rica | 28-0-0 (14 KOs)

## FEATHERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **YURIORKIS GAMBOA**
Cuba | 21-0-0 (16 KOs)
2. **ORLANDO SALIDO**
Mexico | 38-11-2 (26 KOs)
3. **CHRIS JOHN**
Indonesia | 46-0-2 (22 KOs)
4. **JHONNY GONZALEZ**
Mexico | 51-7-0 (45 KOs)
5. **MIKEY GARCIA**
U.S. | 28-0-0 (24 KOs)
6. **BILL DIB**
Australia | 34-1-0 (21 KOs)
7. **JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ**
Puerto Rico | 31-2-0 (28 KOs)
8. **DANIEL PONCE DE LEON**
Mexico | 42-4-0 (35 KOs)
9. **CELESTINO CABALLERO**
Panama | 36-4-0 (23 KOs)
10. **HOZUMI HASEGAWA**
Japan | 30-4-0 (13 KOs)

## JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA**
Japan | 39-4-3 (24 KOs)
2. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
Cuba | 9-0-0 (7 KOs)
3. **NONITO DONAIRE**
Philippines | 28-1-0 (18 KOs))
4. **AKIFUMA SHIMODA**
Japan | 25-3-1 (11 KOs)
5. **P. KRATINGDAENGGYM**
Thailand | 46-2-0 (32 KOs)
6. **JEFFREY MATHEBULA**
South Africa | 26-3-2 (14 KOs)
7. **ABNER MARES**
U.S. | 24-0-1 (13 KOs)
8. **TAKALANI NDLOVU**
South Africa | 33-7-0 (18 KOs)
9. **STEVE MOLITOR**
Canada | 34-2-0 (12 KOs)
10. **RICO RAMOS**
U.S. | 20-1-0 (11 KOs)

## HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING's Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another; 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders chose not to fight one another and either of them fights No. 3, No. 4 or No. 5, the winner may be awarded THE RING belt if the Editorial Board deems the contenders worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his championship weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Ratings are compiled by the magazine's Editorial Board, with the participation of THE RING Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world. To see the complete list of our panelists, click on RATINGS at RingTV.com.

***Records provided by boxrec.com***

## BANTAMWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **ANSELMO MORENO**
   Panama | 33-1-1 (12 KOs)
2. **JOSEPH AGBEKO**
   Ghana | 28-4-0 (22 KOs)
3. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA**
   Japan | 16-0-2 (11 KOs)
4. **KOKI KAMEDA**
   Japan | 28-1-0 (17 KOs)
5. **ERIC MOREL**
   U.S. | 46-3-0 (23 KOs)
6. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
   Philippines | 30-2-3 (19 KOs)
7. **VIC DARCHINYAN**
   Armenia | 37-5-1 (27 KOs)
8. **JORGE ARCE**
   Mexico | 60-6-2 (46 KOs)
9. **LEO SANTA CRUZ**
   Mexico | 19-0-1 (11 KOs)
10. **HUGO RUIZ**
    Mexico | 30-1-0 (27 KOs)

## JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
   Argentina | 36-1-2 (19 KOs)
2. **TEPPARITH SINGWANCHA**
   Thailand | 20-2-0 (13 KOs)
3. **HUGO CAZARES**
   Mexicov36-7-2 (26 KOs)
4. **YOTA SATO**
   Japan | 24-2-1 (12 KOs)
5. **SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI**
   Thailand | 20-5-1 (7 KOs)
6. **TOMONOBU SHIMIZU**
   Japan | 19-4-1 (9 KOs)
7. **TOMAS ROJAS**
   Mexico | 38-13-1 (25 KOs)
8. **NOBUO NASHIRO**
   Japan | 17-4-1 (11 KOs)
9. **JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ**
   Mexico | 13-1-1 (7 KOs)
10. **JUAN ALBERTO ROSAS**
    Mexico | 36-6-0 (27 KOs)

## FLYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS*

C **SONNY BOY JARO**
Philippines | 34-10-5 (24 KOs)

1. **HERNAN MARQUEZ**
   Mexico | 33-2-0 (25 KOs)
2. **BRIAN VILORIA**
   U.S. | 30-3-0 (17 KOs)
3. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
   South Africa | 28-2-0 (19 KOs)
4. **MILAN MELINDO**
   Philippines | 26-0-0 (10 KOs)
5. **P. WONJONGKAM**
   Thailand | 83-4-2 (44 KOs)
6. **ROCKY FUENTES**
   Philippines | 33-6-2 (20 KOs)
7. **JULIO CESAR MIRANDA**
   Mexico | 37-6-1 (29 KOs)
8. **LUIS CONCEPCION**
   Panama | 24-3-0 (19 KOs)
9. **JUAN CARLOS REVECO**
   Argentina | 27-1-0 (16 KOs)
10. **TOSHIYUKI IGARASHI**
    Japan | 15-1-1 (10 KOs)

## JR. FLYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **ULISES SOLIS**
   Mexico | 34-2-3 (21 KOs)
2. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
   Nicaragua | 31-0-0 (26 KOs)
3. **DONNIE NIETES**
   Philippines | 29-1-3 (16 KOs)
4. **KOMPAYAK PORPRAMOOK**
   Thailand | 44-3-0 (30 KOs)
5. **MASAYUKI KURODA**
   Japan | 21-3-1 (13 KOs)
6. **ADRIAN HERNANDEZ**
   Mexico | 22-2-1 (14 KOs)
7. **RYO MIYAZAKI**
   Japan | 16-0-3 (10 KOs)
8. **RAMON HIRALES**
   Mexico | 16-3-1 (9 KOs)
9. **JOHNRIEL CASIMERO**
   Philippines | 16-2-0 (10 KOs)
10. **GILBERTO KEB BAAS**
    Mexico | 35-22-4 (22 KOs)

## STRAWWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS*

C **VACANT**

1. **NKOSINATHI JOYI**
   South Africa | 22-0-0 (15 KOs)
2. **KAZUTO IOKA**
   Japan | 9-0-0 (6 KOs)
3. **MOISES FUENTES**
   Mexico | 14-1-0 (6 KOs)
4. **RAUL GARCIA**
   Mexico | 32-2-1 (20 KOs)
5. **JUAN PALACIOS**
   Nicaragua | 29-3-0 (22 KOs)
6. **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN**
   Thailand | 21-0-0 (6 KOs)
7. **DENVER CUELLO**
   Philippines | 30-4-6 (20 KOs)
8. **FLORANTE CONDES**
   Philippines | 25-6-1 (21 KOs)
9. **AKIRA YAEGASHI**
   Japan | 15-2-0 (8 KOs)
10. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA**
    Japan | 24-5-0 (10 KOs)

# POUND FOR POUND

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
   Philippines | 54-3-2 (38 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR**
   U.S. | 42-0-0 (26 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
3. **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
   Argentina | 49-2-2 (28 KOs) | MIDDLEWEIGHT
4. **NONITO DONAIRE**
   Philippines | 28-1-0 (18 KOs) | JR. FEATHERWEIGHT
5. **ANDRE WARD**
   U.S. | 25-0-0 (13 KOs) | SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico | 54-6-1 (39 KOs) | JR. WELTERWEIGHT
7. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
   Ukraine | 57-3-0 (50 KOs) | HEAVYWEIGHT
8. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
   U.S. | 28-0-0 (12 KOs) | JR. WELTERWEIGHT
9. **VITALI KLITSCHKO**
   Ukraine | 44-2-0 (40 KOs) | HEAVYWEIGHT
10. **YURIORKIS GAMBOA**
    Cuba | 21-0-0 (16 KOs) | FEATHERWEIGHT

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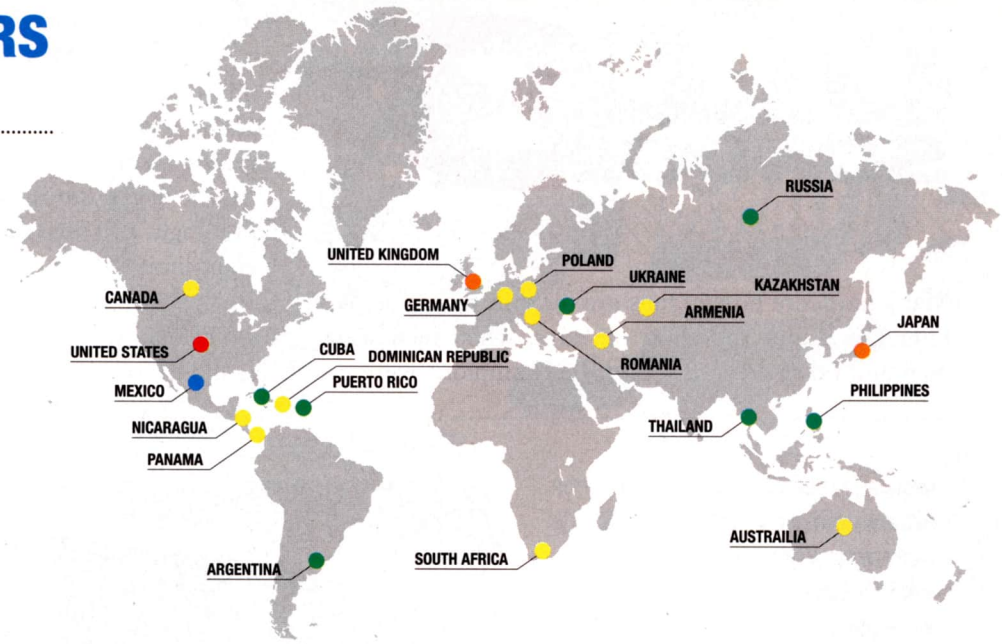
Image: Naoki Fukuda

# RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY

| | |
|---|---|
| UNITED STATES | 29 |
| MEXICO | 28 |
| JAPAN | 16 |
| UNITED KINGDOM | 13 |
| PHILIPPINES | 10 |
| THAILAND | 6 |
| ARGENTINA | 5 |
| CUBA | 5 |
| RUSSIA | 5 |
| SOUTH AFRICA | 5 |
| UKRAINE | 5 |
| GERMANY | 4 |
| PANAMA | 4 |
| POLAND | 4 |
| PUERTO RICO | 3 |
| ARMENIA | 2 |
| AUSTRALIA | 2 |
| CANADA | 2 |
| DOMINICAN REPUBLIC | 2 |
| KAZAKHSTAN | 2 |
| NICARAGUA | 2 |
| ROMANIA | 2 |
| BULGARIA | 1 |
| CAMEROON | 1 |
| COSTA RICA | 1 |
| DENMARK | 1 |
| FINLAND | 1 |
| FRANCE | 1 |
| GHANA | 1 |
| HUNGARY | 1 |
| INDONESIA | 1 |
| ITALY | 1 |
| JAMAICA | 1 |
| NIGERIA | 1 |
| SLOVENIA | 1 |
| SPAIN | 1 |
| TURKEY | 1 |
| UGANDA | 1 |
| UZBEKISTAN | 1 |




● 30 OR MORE ● 20 - 29 ● 10 - 19 ● 5 - 9 ● 2 - 4

## MEXICO VS. HISPANIC WORLD

**MEXICO HAS MORE RATED FIGHTERS THAN ALL OTHER SPANISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES COMBINED. HERE'S HOW IT BREAKS DOWN.**

| DIVISION | MEXICO | OTHERS |
|---|---|---|
| HEAVYWEIGHT | 0 | 0 |
| CRUSIERWEIGHT | 0 | 2 |
| LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT | 0 | 1 |
| SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT | 0 | 0 |
| MIDDLEWEIGHT | 1 | 1 |
| JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT | 3 | 3 |
| WELTERWEIGHT | 0 | 0 |
| JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT | 2 | 2 |
| LIGHTWEIGHT | 2 | 1 |
| JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT | 3 | 3 |
| FEATHERWEIGHT | 3 | 3 |
| JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT | 0 | 1 |
| BANTAMWEIGHT | 3 | 1 |
| JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT | 4 | 1 |
| FLYWEIGHT | 2 | 2 |
| JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT | 4 | 1 |
| STRAWWEIGHT | 2 | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **29** | **23** |

**Anselmo Moreno** of Panama. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

## TOP DOGS

**THE COUNTRIES OF FIGHTERS RATED ATOP EACH OF THE 17 WEIGHT DIVISIONS (EITHER CHAMPION OR NO. 1).**

| | |
|---|---|
| U.S. | 3 |
| ARGENTINA | 2 |
| CUBA | 2 |
| JAPAN | 2 |
| MEXICO | 2 |
| PHILIPPINES | 2 |
| PANAMA | 1 |
| PUERTO RICO | 1 |
| S. AFRICA | 1 |
| UKRAINE | 1 |

*NOTE: The country of fighters who have spent large portions of their lives in two countries was determined primarily by where they spent the bulk of their childhood.*

# OLD SCHOOL 8

Many hardcore boxing fans are the nostalgic type. We reminisce about the good ol' days, when men were men and everyone knew who the champions were. In that spirit, we initiated this new feature in which THE RING staffers — Michael Rosenthal, Doug Fischer and Lem Satterfield — and a different guest each month provide their current champions in the original eight weight classes.

Back in the day, anyone heavier than 175 pounds had to fight as a heavyweight, fighters over the middleweight limit of 160 had to fight as light heavyweights, those heavier than 147 fought as middleweights and so on. That's how it works in our new feature. Our guest this month is ESPN.com boxing writer Dan Rafael.

**MICHAEL ROSENTHAL** RING MAGAZINE EDITOR

**HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** ANDRE WARD
**MIDDLEWEIGHT:** SERGIO MARTINEZ
**WELTERWEIGHT:** MANNY PACQUIAO
**LIGHTWEIGHT:** ANTONIO DEMARCO
**FEATHERWEIGHT:** YURIORKIS GAMBOA
**BANTAMWEIGHT:** ANSELMO MORENO
**FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

**DOUG FISCHER** RINGTV.COM EDITOR

**HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** ANDRE WARD
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**FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

**LEM SATTERFIELD** STAFF WRITER

**HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** ANDRE WARD
**MIDDLEWEIGHT:** SERGIO MARTINEZ
**WELTERWEIGHT:** FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
**LIGHTWEIGHT:** MIGUEL VAZQUEZ
**FEATHERWEIGHT:** YURIORKIS GAMBOA
**BANTAMWEIGHT:** ANSELMO MORENO
**FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

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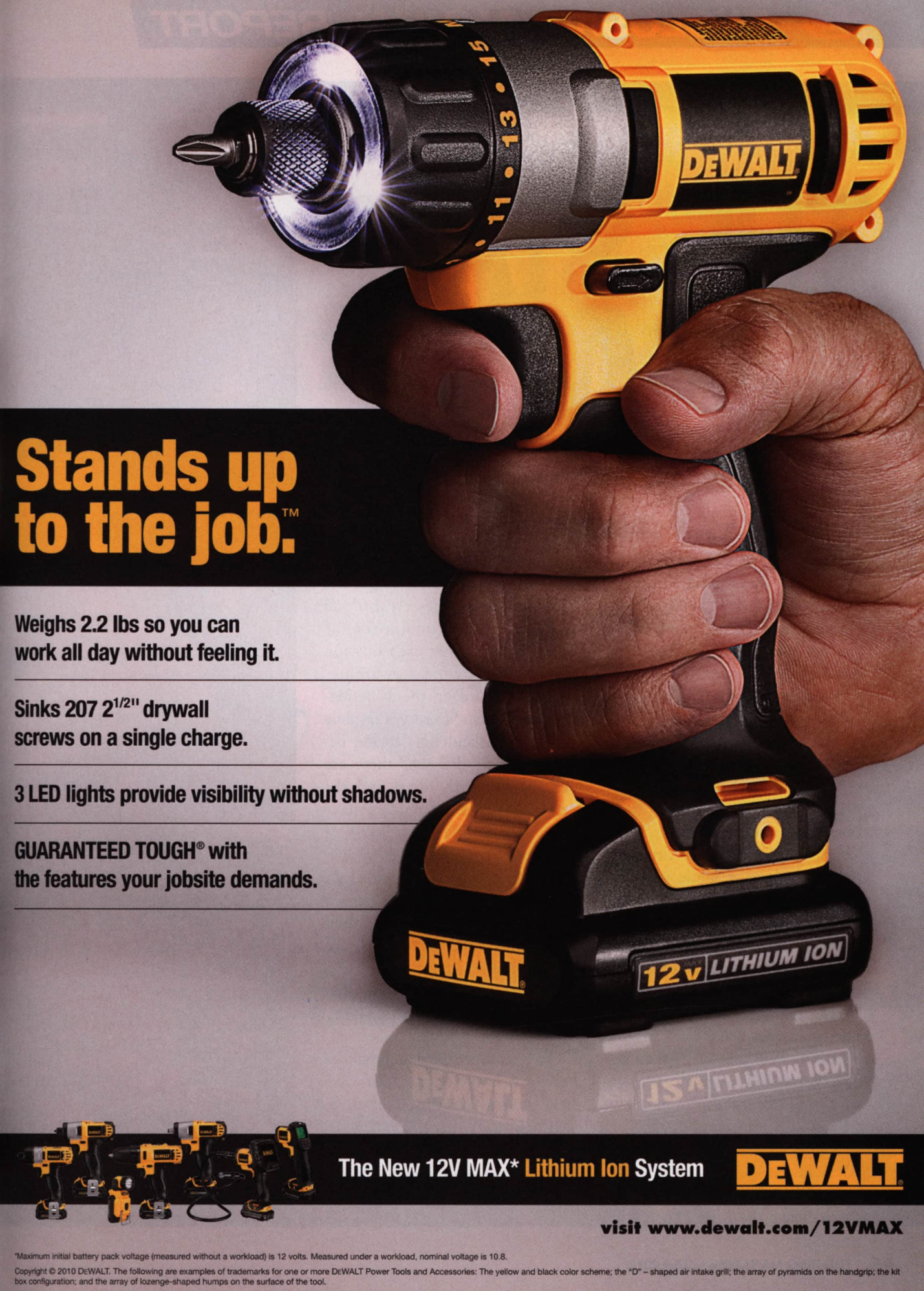
**HEAVYWEIGHT:** WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** BERNARD HOPKINS
**MIDDLEWEIGHT:** SERGIO MARTINEZ
**WELTERWEIGHT:** FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
**LIGHTWEIGHT:** ANTONIO DEMARCO
**FEATHERWEIGHT:** CHRIS JOHN
**BANTAMWEIGHT:** ANSELMO MORENO
**FLYWEIGHT:** BRIAN VILORIA

**Yuriorkis Gamboa** is the best featherweight on three of our four Old School 8 lists. Image: **Hunter Martin-Getty Images**

***NOTE:*** *THESE LISTS WERE COMPILED THROUGH FIGHTS OF APRIL 21.*

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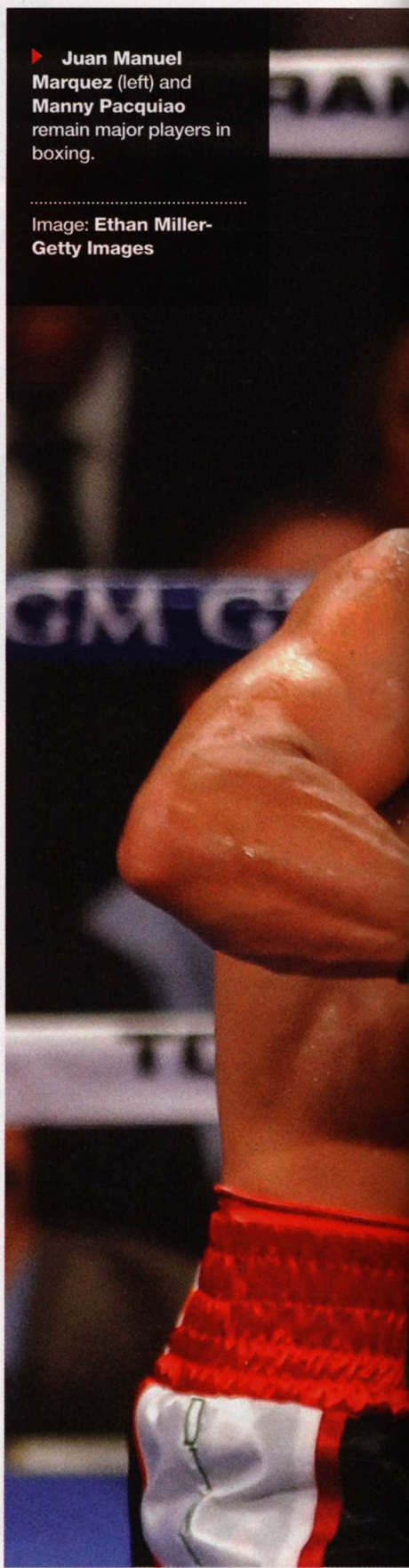
# THE STATE OF THE GAME

By **Don Stradley**



**Juan Manuel Marquez** (left) and **Manny Pacquiao** remain major players in boxing.

Image: **Ethan Miller-Getty Images**

The cover of last year's State of the Game issue featured an illustration of Wladimir Klitschko and David Haye, who were due to fight in July. The bout turned out to be one of the all-time heavyweight stinkers but the lead up to the fight, which went on for a few years, was a lot of fun.

A 12-round fight lasts less than an hour. But the anticipation can go on for weeks or months. You talk about the fight with your friends, or on message boards, or you think about it while you are on your own. You read about it. And some of us, those who are really absorbed in this stuff, actually dream of the fight beforehand. These fights invade our dreams!

This year's State of the Game finds us in that usual state of anticipation. Will Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr. get any closer to signing a fight contract? Will Andre Ward live up to the hype of the Showtime Super Six? Is Lucian Bute as good as he seems to be? Is there anyone who can challenge the Klitschkos? Will Nonito Donaire continue his rise? Will Sergio Martinez ever get the big money fight he deserves? It's all fun to ponder, and you'll see on the following pages that each division has something to look forward to.

First, a word on the accompanying sidebars. "Deserves a Title Shot" is a difficult one to fill, because in some divisions there are four fighters with titles, and the remaining rated contenders have either won a title in the past or had a title shot already. In a division with a RING champion, we mention fighters we'd like to see fight our recognized champ. And "Matchmaker's Dream" can mean different things. Maybe it can mean a lucrative bout, or a bout that would unify titles, or in some cases, it's just a fight we'd like to see.

Keep in mind, the matchmaker's dream at heavyweight from two years ago was Wladimir Klitschko-David Haye.

***Note:*** *This section is based on results through April 21, 2012*

MGM
Jinkee
REYES
GGM

# HEAVYWEIGHT

Heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko continues his reign. Along with THE RING championship, he owns the WBA, IBF and WBO belts, plus a few he may have picked up on the Home Shopping Network. Belts are literally dripping off the guy, and with good reason – he keeps winning. The fights are rarely exciting, but that's not entirely his fault (just partly). Since last year, he won a snorer over David Haye (W 12) and won easily against a sadly outmatched Jean-Marc Mormeck (KO 4). A rematch with Tony Thompson is scheduled for the summer. (Did the fans demand that one?)

Meanwhile, Vitali Klitschko, the WBC titlist, continued his dominance by beating Tomasz Adamek (KO 10) and then overcoming a shoulder injury to whip Dereck Chisora one-handed (W 12). Even though both Wlad and Vitali are exhibiting "old man" injuries, it's not likely they will find a serious challenger among the current men in the division.

Alexander Dimitrenko had a reasonable 2011 campaign, beating Michael Sprott (W 12) and Albert Sosnowski (KO 12), but it's still hard to forget that Dimitrenko lost to the small, light-hitting Eddie Chambers back in '09. We can't figure out whether Robert Helenius is for real, either, or just another one of those Thanksgiving Day floats that settle into the heavyweight division every few years. If his recent struggle to a split-decision win over Chisora was just a glitch – all fighters have them – Helenius might be one to watch. The jury is also still out on Tyson Fury, Denis Boytsov

**Wladimir Klitschko** (pictured celebrating his victory over **Jean-Marc Mormeck**) is the king of the heavyweights.

Image: **Friedemann Vogel-Bongarts-Getty Images**

and Kubrat Pulev, all relative newcomers to the Top 10. As for Ruslan Chagaev, Chris Arreola and Adamek, there's no jury needed because we know what they are – not great, but tough and dependable.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Would it shock you if you heard that Vitali Klitschko had signed to fight Evander Holyfield? Holyfield, 49, still has a wee bit of name value. We can hear Vitali now: "It has always been my goal to fight a legend like Evander Holyfield, and he is not too old to challenge for my title. I am 40, after all." And then Holyfield could go into his annoying routine about how he won't retire until he unifies all nine title belts. The fight could be sold to German fans, who would buy tickets to see the Klitschkos do their laundry. Hey, we're not saying it will happen, we're just saying it wouldn't surprise us. Vitali is talking about fighting Haye. After Haye's dismal showing against Wladimir, is he that much more deserving of a shot than "Commander Evander"?

## HEAVYWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Wladimir Klitschko

**BEST BOXER**
Wladimir Klitschko

**MOST PROTECTED**
Alexander Povetkin

**MOST AVOIDED**
Seth Mitchell

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Jameel McCline

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Chris Arreola-Seth Mitchell

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Alexander Povetkin

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Chris Arreola

**ON THE WAY UP**
Mariusz Wach

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Sam Peter

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Monte Barrett W 12 David Tua

## WHAT'S IN, WHAT'S OUT

**IN:** FLOYD TWEETING ABOUT PRISON FOOD
**OUT:** FLOYD TWEETING ABOUT MANNY

**IN:** MANNY STRUGGLING WITH TAX PROBLEMS
**OUT:** MANNY STRUGGLING WITH MARQUEZ

**IN:** JULIO JR.
**OUT:** HECTOR JR.

**IN:** FOOTBALL PLAYERS TURNED FIGHTERS
**OUT:** FOOTBALL STADIUMS TURNED BOXING ARENAS

**IN:** JORGE ARCE
**OUT:** JORGE SOLIS

**IN:** NOT TURNING IN YOUR URINE TEST
**OUT:** DRINKING URINE

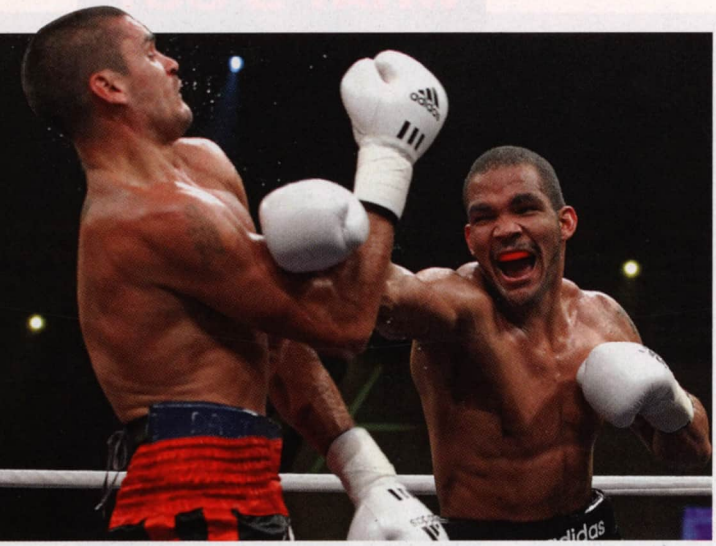
**IN:** GUS JOHNSON
**OUT:** GLEN JOHNSON

**IN:** GUILLERMO JONES AT 39
**OUT:** ROY JONES AT 43

**IN:** PORPRAMOOK
**OUT:** PONGSAKLEK

Image: **Stephen Dunn-Getty Images**

# THE STATE OF THE GAME CRUISERWEIGHT



**Yoan Pablo Hernandez** (right, against **Cesar David Crenz**) is the best boxer in the cruiserweight division.

Image: **Boris Streubel-Bongarts-Getty Images**

Cruiserweight champion Yoan Pablo Hernandez put the kibosh on his critics in February 2012 by earning a decision over Steve Cunningham. Their previous bout had been won by Hernandez on a controversial stoppage, but this time Hernandez proved he was the better fighter, dropping Cunningham twice and winning unanimously on the scorecards. Whether he can prove himself to be a marketable fighter is another story. Cubans fighting out of Germany don't usually see their names on Las Vegas marquees. Still, the division is loaded with capable challengers to his title, which means we could be in for some good cruiserweight fights.

Marco Huck is the division's star-in-waiting. He's charismatic, has a good right hand and has developed an audience in Germany. But irony caught up to him this year – after winning several fights that some thought could have gone to his opponent, he jumped up to the heavyweight class to face Alexander Povetkin and, even though he seemed to dominate, he came up short on the scorecards. Huck promptly announced he was returning to cruiserweight to defend his WBO title against Ola Afolabi, a fighter he has already beaten. Afolabi was competitive against Huck the last time they met.

Krzysztof Wlodarczyk capped off 2011 by traveling to Australia to score a come-from-behind stoppage of hometown hero Danny Green (KO 11). Beating Green gave "Diablo" his third successful defense of the WBC cruiserweight belt and added a few points to his bad-ass index. Green was also whipped by Antonio Tarver last year (KO 9), which was Tarver's debut at cruiserweight. Tarver, 43, was scheduled to face brash, young Lateef Kayode as we went to press, which will undoubtedly send one guy up the ratings and the other one down. Russia's Denis Lebedev, after losing a close one to Huck in 2010, spent 2011 on the senior circuit, notching wins over Roy Jones Jr. (KO 10) and James Toney (W 12). The rest of the Top 10 consists of veterans Giacobbe Fragomeni, Guillermo Jones and Poland's young Mateusz Masternak.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** When the cruiserweight division was created in the early 1980s, it was seen as a dumping ground for aging light heavyweights who could no longer make 175, and small heavyweights who couldn't compete with the bigger guys. It was boxing's flea market, where the sport's cast-offs gathered, hoping to sell themselves one last time. But ask yourself: Has the division's status really improved since then, especially with Roy Jones Jr. and James Toney lurking there? True, there have been a handful of very good cruiserweights who excelled for a short time, but this has never been a glamour division and has rarely captured the interest of even the most hardcore of fans.

## CRUISERWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Marco Huck

**BEST BOXER**
Yoan Pablo Hernandez

**MOST PROTECTED**
Grigory Drozd

**MOST AVOIDED**
Mateusz Masternak

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Troy Ross

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Yoan P. Hernandez-Marco Huck

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Mateusz Masternak

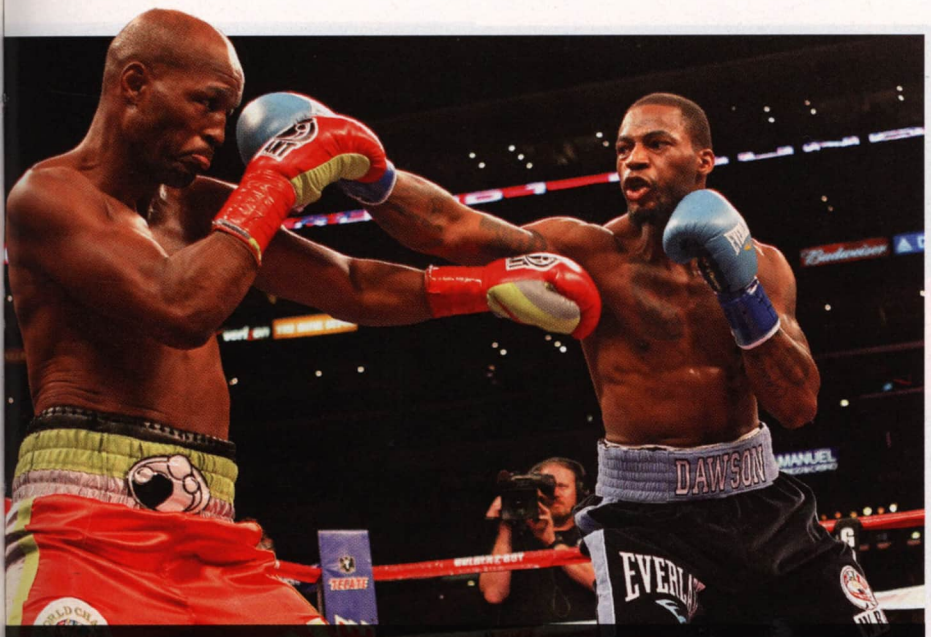
**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Marco Huck

**ON THE WAY UP**
Rakhim Chakhkiev

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Wayne Braithwaite

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
K. Wlodarczyk KO 11 Danny Green

# LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT




**Bernard Hopkins** (left) and **Chad Dawson** have been key figures in the light heavyweight division the past few years. Image: **Stephen Dunn-Getty Images**

By the time you read this, you will know whether reigning RING champion and WBC titleholder Bernard Hopkins was able to fool Father Time once again or whether Chad Dawson finally convinced 47-year-old "B-Hop" that the hourglass had finally run out of sand.

It doesn't matter which cliché comes true, because the light heavyweight division is not exactly at a peak these days. The fact Tavoris Cloud and Jean Pascal, two sluggers with strong personalities, are in negotiations to fight this summer would generate some interest. But then again, neither guy looked great in their most recent bouts. Cloud was awarded a controversial "gift" decision over the stylish Gabriel Campillo, while Pascal lost to Hopkins by decision in May 2011. Pascal has been inactive since, although he has made some noise about challenging WBA titlist Beibut Shumenov and saw a bout with Cloud collapse at the negotiating table in April.

Shumenov, with only 12 pro bouts to his credit, may be on the verge of breaking out. Not only does he bear a resemblance to an old Marvel comics hero known as The Sub Mariner, but he was very impressive in beating Danny Santiago last summer (KO 9). Shumenov also split a pair of close bouts with Campillo back in 2009 and 2010, which seems very impressive now that Campillo has shown he's on par with the division's best.

The rest of our light heavies don't inspire us very much. Former WBO titleholder Zsolt Erdei spent last year spinning his wheels, his only bout a stoppage of spent veteran Byron Mitchell (KO 6), while Adrian Diaconu has been M.I.A. since dropping a decision to Dawson. Nathan Cleverly has talent but he seems content to box around the United Kingdom. He had a bout scheduled with Robin Krasniqi for April 28 at the Royal Albert Hall in Kensington. Karo Murat's last fight was an October 2011 draw with Campillo. Ismayl Sillakh, a highly decorated amateur from Ukraine, rounds out the ratings. He was scheduled to face Denis Grachev in April.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** No light heavyweights have been THE RING's Fighter of the Year between 1947, when Gus Lesnevich won, and 2006, when Glen Johnson won. This is peculiar, since the 175-pound group has always been a strong division full of stars, including Joey Maxim, Archie Moore, Bob Foster, Jose Torres, Willie Pastrano, Michael Spinks, Matthew Saad Muhammad, and many more. Will it be another five decades before a light heavyweight wins our award?

## LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Tavoris Cloud

**BEST BOXER**
Bernard Hopkins

**MOST PROTECTED**
Dmitry Sukhotsky

**MOST AVOIDED**
Alejandro Berrio

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Richard Hall

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Tavoris Cloud-Jean Pascal

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Dawid Kostecki

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Beibut Shumenov

**ON THE WAY UP**
Luis Garcia

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Byron Mitchell

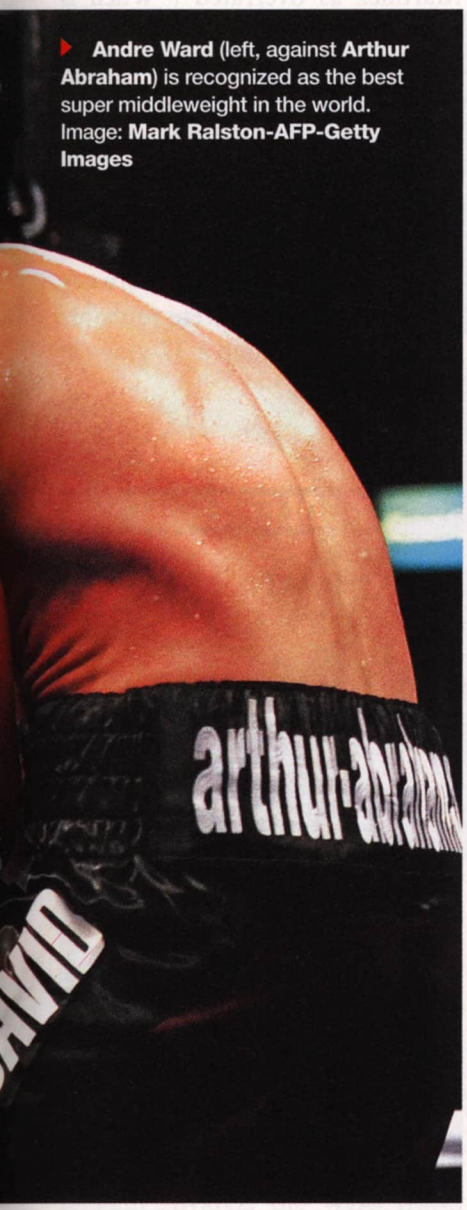
**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Bernard Hopkins W 12 Jean Pascal

# SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT

As Showtime's Super Six World Boxing Classic came to an end after what seemed like a decade, the 168-pound class feels alive and bursting with potential. But is it? Andre Ward won the Showtime bauble and is recognized by THE RING as leader of the pack, but he has yet to create anything resembling excitement. And some of our top contenders, such as Glen Johnson and Sakio Bika, seem to be ranked out of habit, as if they've been grandfathered in. Consider that Johnson hasn't won an important fight in years, and Bika has fought only once since November 2010, and it seems the super middleweights might actually be a lesser division.

On the other end of the table are some raw recruits, such as 23-year-old Englander George Groves, who has had only 14 fights, and Thomas Oosthuizen, also 23, with 19 bouts. Oosthuizan, of South Africa, had a bout scheduled at press time with Marcus Johnson.

Arthur Abraham and Mikkel Kessler are trying to rebuild their careers after leaving the tournament, but we may never see them again on these shores. Abraham, who outpointed Piotr Wilczewski in March, his second fight since stinking out the Super Six, will probably stay in Germany, filling up small arenas and making money. As for Kessler, scheduled to face Allan Green soon, he seems injury-prone and will probably ride out the rest of his career taking easy fights in Denmark. We'll add Robert Stieglitz to this group. He's 30, owns the WBO title at 168 and has some skills, but he has been KO'd twice and doesn't like to fight



**Andre Ward** (left, against **Arthur Abraham**) is recognized as the best super middleweight in the world. Image: **Mark Ralston-AFP-Getty Images**

outside of Germany. With 43 pro bouts under his belt, he last defended his title in January against Henry Weber, who had had 16 fights. Stieglitz won on points. Surprised? Anyway, it looks like Abraham may be Sieglitz's next challenger. Nice knowing you, Artie, Mikkel and Bob.

Fortunately, Lucian Bute and Carl Froch are scheduled to fight on May 26, but shame on HBO and Showtime for letting this one slip away and end up on Epix. Meanwhile, the division's dark horse could be Kelly Pavlik. If he continues to work and improve under Robert Garcia's watch, he could be a factor at 168.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** It's very likely that organizers of the Super Six had hoped for a finale between Andre Dirrell and Ward, two young Americans. Dirrell left the tourney after being injured, but in December he returned from a year-plus layoff to score a two-round KO of Darryl Cunningham. If he wins a couple more, we may yet see Ward-Dirrell.

## SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Lucian Bute

**BEST BOXER**
Andre Ward

**MOST PROTECTED**
Nikola Sjekloca

**MOST AVOIDED**
Anthony Dirrell

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Robin Reid

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Andre Ward-Lucian Bute

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Lucian Bute

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Lucian Bute

**ON THE WAY UP**
Adonis Stevenson

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Jesse Brinkley

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Carl Froch W 12 Glen Johnson

## LONGEST REIGNING TITLEHOLDERS

The graph below illustrates the game's 10 most established titleholders (RING, WBC, WBA, IBF, or WBO). With many of these fighters getting on in years, and some already breaking away from their weight classes, it's certain that next year's compilation will look much different.

**CHRIS JOHN**
(WBA FEATHERWEIGHT)
80 MONTHS

**WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
(IBF HEAVYWEIGHT)
71 MONTHS

**FELIX STURM**
(WBA MIDDLEWEIGHT)
59 MONTHS

**LUCIAN BUTE**
(IBF SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT)
53 MONTHS

**ANSELMO MORENO**
(WBA BANTAMWEIGHT)
46 MONTHS

**GUILLERMO JONES**
(WBA CRUISERWEIGHT)
42 MONTHS

**TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
(WBO JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT)
36 MONTHS

**VYACHESLAV SENCHENKO**
(WBA WELTERWIGHT)
36 MONTHS

**MARCO HUCK**
(WBO CRUISERWEIGHT)
32 MONTHS

**ROBERT STIEGLITZ**
(WBO SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT)
32 MONTHS

# THE STATE OF THE GAME MIDDLEWEIGHT

**Sergio Martinez** has no obvious rivals in the middleweight division. Image: **Al Bello-Getty Images**

Sergio Martinez needed a few rounds to get in range, but once there he demolished Irish Matthew Macklin in the explosive manner we've come to expect from "Maravilla" (TKO 11). The quandary of Martinez's career is that he has yet to earn a monster payday even though he has already beaten Paul Williams and Kelly Pavlik.

You can't blame Martinez for calling out Floyd Mayweather Jr. At 37, Martinez probably sees no upside in battling the current flock of middleweights to "create the money." Felix Sturm, Daniel Geale, Dmitry Pirog and Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. own the four alphabet belts, but only Chavez Jr. would create any interest stateside for Martinez. Chavez Jr., who was arrested on suspicion of drunken driving prior to his last fight, was scheduled to face England's Martin Murray, but visa problems prevented Murray from entering the U.S. Also, Chavez will defend his title in June against Andy Lee, a game, underrated fighter. Martinez is allegedly penciled in to face the winner of Chavez-Lee. Geale and Pirog are also scheduled for a unification bout, to be fought on HBO.

Hassan N'Dam N'Jikam, Gennady Golovkin, Grzegorz Proksa and Sebastian Zbik fill out the rest of THE RING middleweight ratings. Golovkin is the wild card of the bunch. He has KO'd 19 of 22 opponents, and while the best name on his record is the shopworn Kassim Ouma (KO 10), he has an awesome amateur background, with wins over Lee, Andre Dirrell and Lucian Bute.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Was anyone else annoyed by Larry Merchant's hyperbole during the Martinez-Macklin bout? The curmudgeonly one seemed bent on dismissing Martinez as overrated ("When is Martinez going to start throwing combinations?"). We know Merchant earns his bones by playing devil's advocate, but do you get the feeling HBO has not forgiven Martinez for thrashing Williams and Pavlik, a pair of popular young American fighters who the network had invested in and were probably easier to market than a 37-year-old from Argentina?

## MIDDLEWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Sergio Martinez

**BEST BOXER**
Sergio Martinez

**MOST PROTECTED**
Gilberto Sanchez

**MOST AVOIDED**
Sergio Martinez

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Carlos Baldomir

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Sergio Martinez-Floyd Mayweather Jr.

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Sergio Martinez

**ON THE WAY UP**
Andy Lee

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Saul Duran

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Felix Sturm W 12 Matthew Macklin

# JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT

**Saul "Canelo" Alvarez** is a major attraction and continues to improve. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

By the time this is in your hands, THE RING's top-rated junior middleweight and WBA boss Miguel Cotto will have either been beaten by Floyd Mayweather Jr. or he will have shocked the world and sent Floyd to prison with his first "L."

Saul Alvarez, the WBC titlist, occasionally looks robotic, but he seems to improve in fits and starts. He had very little problem with Kermit Cintron last November, and was scheduled to face 40-year-old Shane Mosley on the Mayweather-Cotto undercard. Vanes Martirosyan remains undefeated after 32 bouts, and has been mentioned as a possible WBC mandatory defense for Alvarez should "Canelo" beat Mosley. Erislandy Lara, the great Cuban amateur who was robbed of a decision over Paul Williams, stopped Ronald Hearns in one round on April 20. Meanwhile, Sergei Dzinziruk, inactive since being blown away by Sergio Martinez in March of 2011, was on tap to face WBA titlist Austin Trout.

IBF titleholder Cornelius Bundrage is 39 and fights only once a year now. He's waiting for a big send-off so he can retire from this bloody sport. Even he seemed disappointed when he learned his next bout would be a rematch with Cory Spinks, the man he took the title from. Alfredo Angulo, a hard puncher with guts but plenty of shortcomings, could still be recycled unless his war with James Kirkland took too much out of him. Kirkland, fresh off a fluky and undeserved DQ win over "King" Carlos Molina, was being discussed as an opponent for Williams, but that bout was dashed when Kirkland announced he would be taking time off for shoulder surgery and rehab.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** It wasn't that long ago that Paul Williams was the fighter everyone feared, the fighter no one would fight, the fighter who couldn't get an opponent. He had a lot of questions to answer when he fought Nobuhiro Ishida last February. He won fairly easily, but there wasn't much about him that seemed unbeatable. There's no reason for any fighter to avoid him now, except for the fact that he still can't draw flies with a handful of honey.

## JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
James Kirkland

**BEST BOXER**
Miguel Cotto

**MOST PROTECTED**
Charlie Ota

**MOST AVOIDED**
Demetrius Andrade

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Anthony Mundine

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Delvin Rodriguez-James Kirkland

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Delvin Rodriguez

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Miguel Cotto

**ON THE WAY UP**
Jonathan Gonzales

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Antonio Margarito

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Pawel Wolak D 10 Delvin Rodriguez

# WELTERWEIGHT

**Kell Brook** of England (left, against **Matthew Hatton**) is a welterweight to watch.

Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

With Manny Pacquiao fighting a junior welterweight in June and Floyd Mayweather fighting a junior middleweight in May, the welterweight group feels a bit rudderless, its two top stars fighting men from other divisions. While Manny and Floyd continue their strange dance of avoidance, the rest of the 147-pounders are making cases for themselves, none better than Devon Alexander, who thoroughly outboxed Marcos Madaina a few months ago, living up to the expectations we'd had for him before his choke-job against Timothy Bradley.

Another U.S. product, Mike Jones, continues his apprenticeship by facing Randall Bailey in June. Jones is a talented young man, but

it's about time for him to stop fighting trialhorses. The UK's Kell Brook has also been feasting on trialhorse meat, having just defeated Matthew Hatton (W 12). Perhaps a good step would be for Brook and Jones to face each other. And if Selcuk Aydin can get past Robert Guerrero this summer, perhaps Jones-Aydin or Brook-Aydin would make sense. If none of those bouts can be made, the loser of the upcoming Victor Ortiz-Andre Berto rematch will be looking for something to do. Brook, Aydin and Jones should be getting primed to step up.

The sleeper in the class might be WBA titlist Vyacheslav Senchenko of Ukraine, who was scheduled to face Paulie Malignaggi on April 29. Senchenko, 34, is undefeated in 32 bouts but has rarely fought outside of his hometown of Donetsk, and his opposition hasn't been stellar. Malignaggi is hardly the reincarnation of Carmen Basilio but will probably be the best fighter Senchenko has faced. Veteran Jan Zaveck rebounded in his first bout since losing to Berto by earning a decision over Bethuel Uushona in March.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** If Pacquiao turns back the challenge of Bradley, will it undo some of the bad vibes stirred up by Pacquiao's close call with Marquez? Provided the bout doesn't end on a head butt cut (which is quite likely), it should help boost Manny's stock for a couple of reasons. For one, Bradley is a young, strong fighter and he looks the part. Fans are suckers for muscled physiques, and the image of a musclehead like Bradley succumbing to Pacquiao will work wonders. For another, Pacquiao will have beaten a fighter who isn't coming off a knockout loss. Still, even a win over Bradley may not convince the growing number of Pacquiao critics. They may write it off as Pacquiao beating a young man who was out of his league. Also, since Bradley isn't much of a name, the pay-per-view numbers might be weak, giving more ammo to those who want to dismiss Manny as a lot of smoke and mirrors. It's a shame. Sometimes you can't please anybody.

## WELTERWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Manny Pacquiao

**BEST BOXER**
Floyd Mayweather Jr.

**MOST PROTECTED**
Wale Omotoso

**MOST AVOIDED**
Luis Abregu

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Antonio Pitalua

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Manny Pacquiao-Floyd Mayweather Jr

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Kell Brook

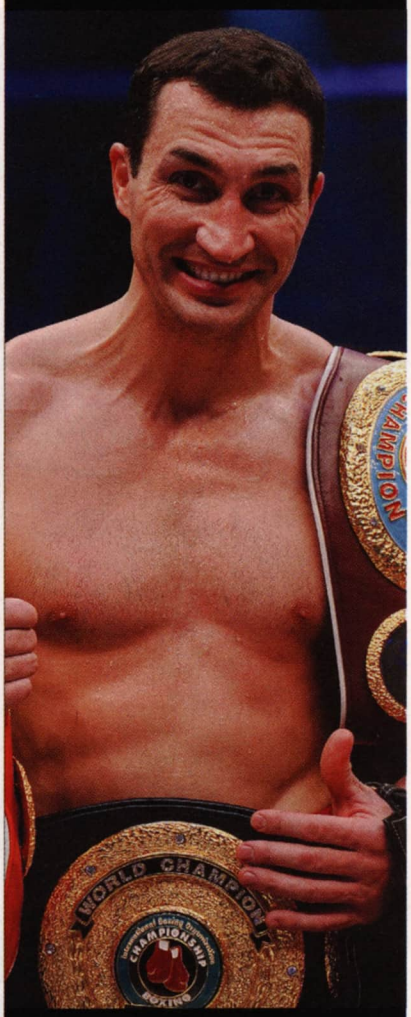
**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Manny Pacquiao

**ON THE WAY UP**
Yoshihiro Kamegai

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Lovemore Ndou

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Victor Ortiz W 12 Andre Berto

## TITLEHOLDERS VS. TITLEHOLDERS

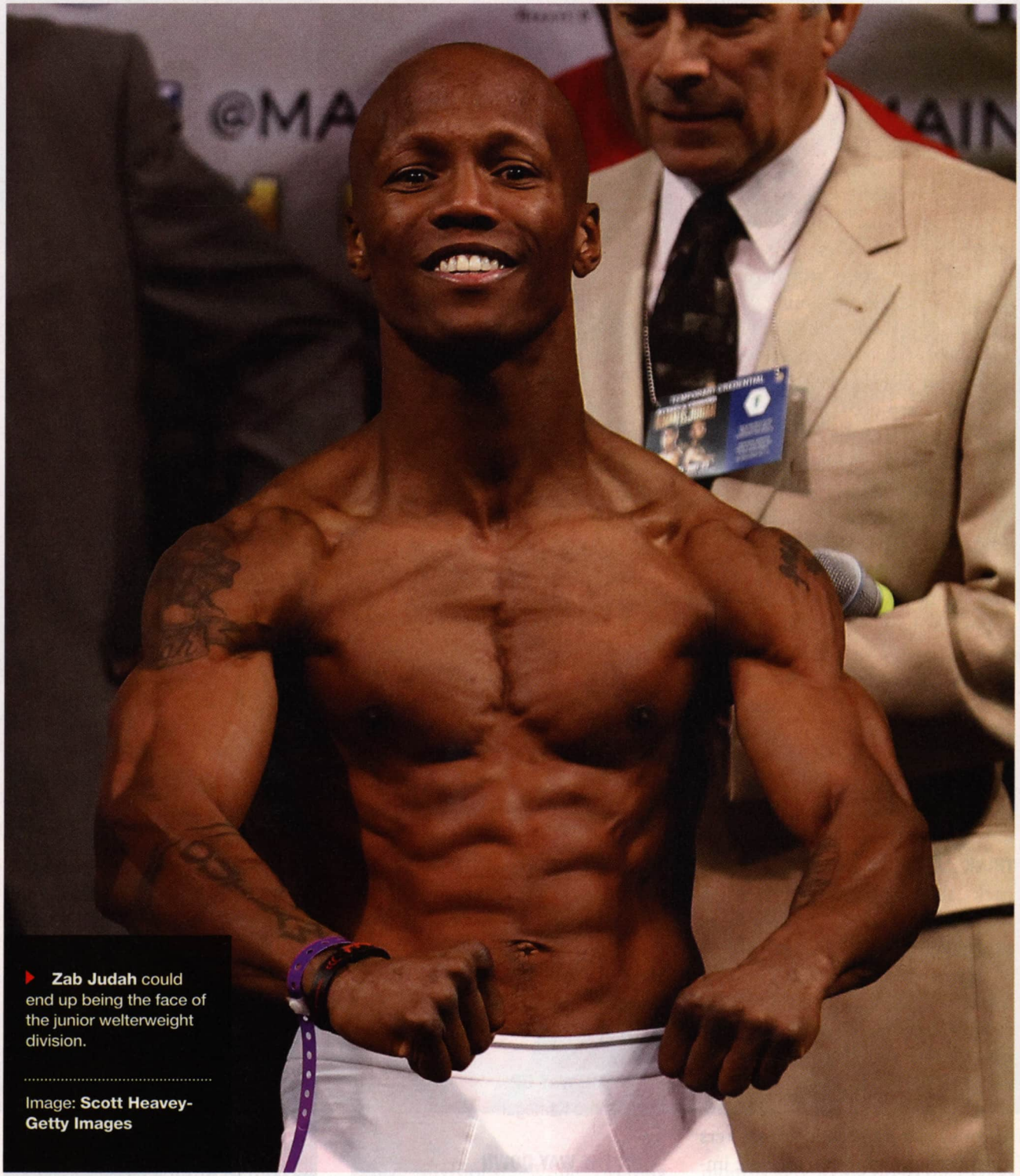



One of the ways to calculate a fighter's worth is to count the number of wins he has over other champions or titleholders. Here's how THE RING's pound-for-pound Top 10 stack up:

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO** 14
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.** 16
3. **SERGIO MARTINEZ** 3
4. **NONITO DONAIRE** 6
5. **ANDRE WARD** 3
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** 6
7. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** 10
8. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY** 4
9. **VITALI KLITSCHKO** 6
10. **YURIORKIS GAMBOA** 3

Image: Patrik Stollarz-AFP-Getty Images

# JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT



**Zab Judah** could end up being the face of the junior welterweight division.

Image: **Scott Heavey-Getty Images**

This class has been broiling over with activity in recent months, and much of it was scene-shifting. Some of the bigger events included Amir Khan dropping a close decision to Lamont Peterson, Erik Morales showing his age by losing on points to Danny Garcia, and Zab Judah creaming Vernon Paris (KO 9). When you include Mike Alvarado, who scored a tremendous, come-from-behind KO of Breidis Prescott last November and then won a convincing unanimous decision over Mauricio Herrera in

April, plus the hard-punching Lucas Matthysse, you have the ingredients for an entertaining weight division. You can mix and match any of the names here and come up with a fight people would want to see.

There's enough here to make up for the absence of Timothy Bradley, should he decide to stay at welterweight after his bout with Manny Pacquiao. Khan has also said he wants to move up to 147, although he has a pending rematch with Peterson. If Khan and Bradley are bolting, what does that leave us with?

Oddly enough, Judah could end up being the face of the division for a while. Judah's dismantling of Paris was so complete that it is tempting to forget how flat he looked against Khan, when he went down on a body shot and claimed foul. Judah has usually failed against elite fighters, but he has always performed well against second-tier fighters, and he exposed Paris for the rookie he is. Judah is now a veteran, but he's still quick and strong. Let's say Peterson wins his return bout with Khan. A Peterson-Judah bout sounds pretty good to us. And since Peterson is not exactly a superstar, who says Judah doesn't have a chance to beat him? Another familiar fighter to watch is Juan Manuel Marquez, who has entered the junior welterweight ratings.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Marcos Maidana, usually one of our favorites, looked so bad in his losing effort against Devon Alexander that we're tempted to rethink his entire career. Has he been just an overrated awkward fighter all along? Was he simply fortunate to fight someone who quit in Victor Ortiz? Then Maidana had Khan out on his feet but couldn't finish the job. He also struggled with an over-the-hill Morales. Still, he's a game slugger and might be recycled for one more turn. How about a battle of warhorses pitting Maidana against former titlists Juan Urango or Michael Katsidis? And depending on the outcome of Ortiz-Berto II, it is likely that somebody will make Maidana-Ortiz II. The good news is that Maidana seems aware of his shortcomings. He announced in April that he was linking up with this year's hottest trainer, Robert Garcia.

## JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Lucas Matthysse

**BEST BOXER**
Amir Khan

**MOST PROTECTED**
Jessie Vargas

**MOST AVOIDED**
Ajose Olusegun

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Nate Campbell

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Marcos Maidana-Lucas Matthysse

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Denis Shafikov

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Marcos Maidana

**ON THE WAY UP**
Ajose Olusegun

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Mike Arnaoutis

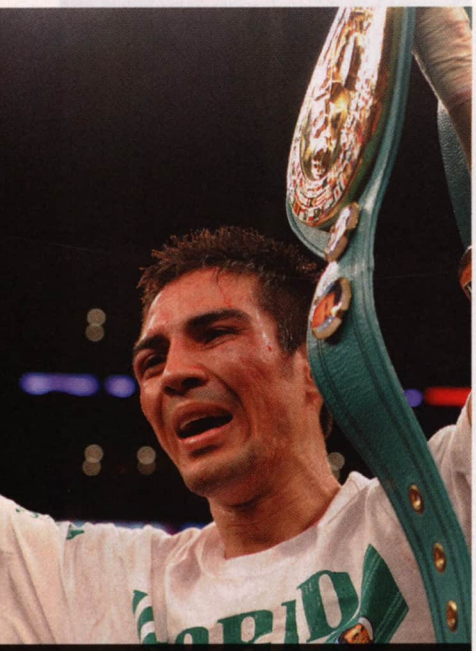
**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Ajose Olusegun W 12 Ali Chebah

## CHAMPS AND TITLEHOLDERS BY COUNTRY

Mexico still leads in this race, but the U.S. has been showing some life lately, holding a solid second, far ahead of third place Japan. Keep an eye on Ukraine, though. The Klitschkos' home country could turn out to be the next Philadelphia. (Note: This chart includes RING champions, and WBC, WBA, IBF, and WBO titleholders.)

| | |
|---|---|
| MEXICO | 13 |
| USA | 11 |
| JAPAN | 6 |
| PHILIPPINES | 4 |
| UKRAINE | 3 |
| SOUTH AFRICA | 3 |
| CUBA | 2 |
| GERMANY | 2 |
| PANAMA | 2 |
| UNITED KINGDOM | 2 |
| KAZAKHSTAN | 2 |
| RUSSIA | 2 |
| ARGENTINA | 2 |
| THAILAND | 2 |
| AUSTRALIA | 1 |
| PUERTO RICO | 1 |
| INDONESIA | 1 |
| AUSTRALIA | 1 |
| NICARAGUA | 1 |
| POLAND | 1 |
| ROMANIA | 1 |

# LIGHTWEIGHT



**Antonio DeMarco** stunned the boxing world by beating **Jorge Linares** in October. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

Juan Manuel Marquez, now campaigning at 140, is no longer recognized as THE RING lightweight champion, but that wasn't the only recent shakeup at 135. Brandon Rios, who had been everyone's favorite of late based on his explosive performances last year, has been evicted from our ratings, too. If failing to make weight for two consecutive bouts weren't enough, his abysmal showing against Richard Abril, in which Rios was awarded a split decision win for, apparently, just putting on his gloves, was all we could take. It's not as if we didn't see it coming, but we didn't think he'd leave the division with such a whimper. Also, perennial contender Robert Guerrero is scheduled for a summer bout at welterweight with Selcuk Aydin, so farewell to him, too.

As the division faces the rest of 2012 in a somewhat depleted state, the focus goes to WBC titlist Antonio DeMarco, who stunned the boxing world by beating Jorge Linares last October (KO 10), and followed that up with a complete flattening of Miguel Roman in March (KO 5). A rematch with Linares was being discussed until Linares was stopped in two rounds by Sergio Thompson. DeMarco still has a July date to defend the WBC belt, but no opponent as of press time. We'd suggest he fight John Molina, which would be a nice battle between two willing punchers.

Just below DeMarco is IBF titlist Miguel Vazquez, followed by the UK trio of Ricky Burns, Kevin Mitchell and John Murray. Newly rated Hank Lundy has a loss to Molina, but has a win over Abril, while a recent 10-round decision win over Dannie Williams showed Lundy's grit. He rose from an early knockdown to engage in an entertaining, back-and-forth bout. Sherif Bogere of Uganda and Gavin Rees of Wales round out the Top 10. Bogere is an undefeated 23-year-old, while Reese is a 31-year-old veteran of 38 bouts, and a former WBA titleholder. It's a scrappy division, and we could be in for some interesting bouts. There's not much separating these fighters, and we're curious to see if any of them can pull away from the pack.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Molina is no relation to John John Molina, a very exciting fighter of the 1980s and '90s, but we can lay their records side by side to see an interesting example of how times have changed. At approximately the same point in his career that John is at now, with 23 wins on his ledger, John John had already completed his memorable trilogy with Tony "The Tiger" Lopez. Meanwhile, this era's John Molina is still waiting for his first big break. The first Molina fought in an era in which fighters were rushed into big fights too soon. Now, except for the lightest of weight classes where a fighter might get a title shot after only a few bouts, there seems to be a tendency for fighters to enjoy a longer gestation period. Perhaps there is less of a rush these days since the major networks aren't interested. Or maybe there are so many journeymen out there that a fighter can spend three years making money by fighting the old goats. Nice work if you can get it.

## LIGHTWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
John Molina

**BEST BOXER**
Richard Abril

**MOST PROTECTED**
Mercito Gesta

**MOST AVOIDED**
Miguel Vazquez

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Hector Velazquez

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Antonio DeMarco-John Molina

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Gavin Rees

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Antonio DeMarco

**ON THE WAY UP**
Luis Ramos Jr

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Daniel Attah

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Brandon Rios KO 10 Miguel Acosta

# JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT

**Adrien Broner** is the best boxer in the division but **Takashi Uchiyama** (left, against **Jorge Solis**) is its biggest puncher. Image: **Kazuhiro Nogi-AFP-Getty Images**

Although WBA titlist Takashi Uchiyama has done most of his fighting in Tokyo, he can't be accused of beating only hometown setups. He owns KO wins over Nedal Hussein (KO 8), Juan Carlos Salgado (KO 12) and most recently Jorge Solis (KO 11). All of this and he's had fewer than 20 professional bouts! He's a real puncher, having scored 56 KOs during his amateur career, which is impressive considering the amateurs don't exactly swing for the fences.

Young Adrien Broner seems to want all the marbles, and his recent wins over Jason Litzau (KO 1), Vicente Rodriguez (KO 3) and Eloy Perez (KO 4) have almost made up for his safety-first performance against Daniel Ponce De Leon. Broner may not be long for the junior lightweights because there isn't a ton of money in the division, and he is a growing boy.

Argenis Mendez recently lost to Salgado, but he's young at 25 and can bounce back. However, after losing to Salgado, he was promptly matched against 40-year-old journeyman Alex Perez, who had 42 losses on his record. Mendez stopped Perez in two. Is that even a confidence builder?

Juan Carlos Burgos scored a decisive win over Cristobal Cruz (W 12) in February, and Roman Martinez finally returned after losing his WBO belt to Ricky Burns in 2010 to beat Daniel Attah last October. Undefeated Bryan Vazquez rarely fights outside of Costa Rica. He should take a page from Diego Magdaleno, who has been actively trying to court the American audience, making his style more fan-friendly and appearing on ShoBox. Magdaleno recently handed veteran Fernando Beltran his first stoppage loss, looking a bit like vintage Hector Camacho, circa 1989, in the process. Meanwhile, talented Takahiro Ao defeated capable Terdsak Kokietgym by a unanimous decision in April.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** At age 32, Uchiyama is probably in his prime. If he were Mexican or African-American, HBO would be camping out on his front door, offering him the world. Instead, we may never see the guy except for YouTube clips. In the meantime, we can listen to the HBO team guffaw over Broner as if there has never been a cocky fighter before in the history of boxing. Broner isn't without ability, but we've seen this act before. And the hair brushing gimmick would be funnier if he actually had hair.

## JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Takashi Uchiyama

**BEST BOXER**
Adrien Broner

**MOST PROTECTED**
Will Tomlinson

**MOST AVOIDED**
Roman Martinez

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Emmanuel Lucero

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Takashi Uchiyama-Adrien Broner

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Diego Magdaleno

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Adrien Broner

**ON THE WAY UP**
Gary Russell Jr.

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Heriberto Ruiz

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Takashi Uchiyama KO 11 Jorge Solis

# THE STATE OF THE GAME FEATHERWEIGHT

**Mikey Garcia** might turn out to be the best in a deep group of featherweights. Image: **Hunter-Martin-Getty Images**

Funny how things can change. Not long ago, Yuriorkis Gamboa and Juan Manuel Lopez were regarded as the future of boxing, but at this point in time Gamboa is being chastised for ducking out of a bout with Brandon Rios, and Lopez is now 0-2 against Orlando Salido, who not long ago was considered a faded journeyman but is now viewed as a legit tough guy.

Continuing in this vein, Chris John looked like he wanted to become part of the American scene a few years ago, but now he seems content to fight as far away from us as possible. Daniel Ponce De Leon was supposed to be a rampaging brawler with crushing power but now seems like little more than a tough, stepping-stone opponent; Celestino Caballero was on THE RING's pound-for-pound list but no longer seems so special after dropping a pair of bouts, although he did win the WBA belt and has defended it once against Satoshi Hosono.

Australia's Billy Dib has been awesome since last year's State of the Game, winning the IBF featherweight belt by beating Jorge Lacierva (W 12), and then defending his laurels twice, beating Alberto Servidei (KO 1) and Eduardo Escobedo (KO 6). But the real cream of the class may turn out to be Mikey Garcia, who has stopped 24 of 28 opponents and has the kind of classic style that is both economical and beautiful to watch. In short, the featherweights are a strong group. Hey, Showtime, here's your next tournament.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Like many others in the featherweight division, Jhonny Gonzalez has gone through a change, but for the better. A few years ago he was thought to be a spent bantamweight who couldn't win the big ones but has been reborn as a hard-slugging featherweight titlist. If there is any justice in the boxing world (we know, there isn't) he will get a date on Showtime or HBO before the curtains come down on his career, or at the very least, a juicy spot on the undercard of a big pay-per-view. Boxing promoters and the networks should be putting their heads together to make Gonzalez-Salido or Gonzalez-Lopez. Why a legitimate bomber like Gonzalez isn't a star is one of the many mysteries of contemporary boxing. Is he not photogenic enough? Is his back story not sad enough? Sheesh, what can a fighter do to get attention? Does every fighter have to be an underwear model who grew up in abject poverty and has a family member on life support?

## FEATHERWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Jhonny Gonzalez

**BEST BOXER**
Mikey Garcia

**MOST PROTECTED**
Chris John

**MOST AVOIDED**
Jhonny Gonzalez

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Frankie Archuleta

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Jhonny Gonzalez-Orlando Salido

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Mikey Garcia

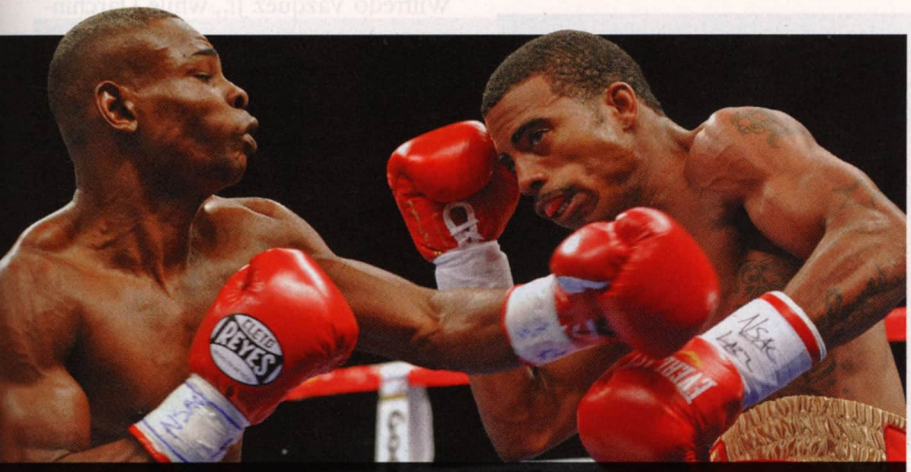
**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Orlando Salido

**ON THE WAY UP**
Nicholas Walters

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Rogers Mtagwa

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Orlando Salido KO 8 Juan M. Lopez

# JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT



**Guillermo Rigondeaux** (left) made a big statement when he overwhelmed **Rico Ramos.** Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

The junior featherweights have had a topsy-turvy year. Here's how it went, with apologies to Jim Lampley: Bang! Akifumi Shimoda comes to America to fight for the vacant WBA title, looks great for a few rounds and then get's KO'd with one punch by Rico Ramos. Bang! Ramos seems like an up and comer but in his next fight gets KO'd by a body shot from Cuban Guillermo Rigondeaux. Bang! Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym of Thailand beats five opponents in a row after his upset loss to Ryol Li Lee in 2010, climbing his way back up our ratings (even though his wins were over soft opposition). And then, bang! Toshiaki Nishioka proves his stardom in Japan was not a fluke by coming to America and earning a points win over Rafael Marquez to win the WBC belt and put himself in a position to face WBO boss Nonito Donaire, although the highly talented Donaire has itchy feet and acts like he wants Floyd Mayweather Jr. Donaire's recent win over Wilfredo Vazquez Jr. (W 12) was a solid, professional performance, but many are wondering if he can carry his punch up to a new weight division. We'll see what he can do this July when he faces the slick Christian Mijares.

Abner Mares stands out among the second tier of junior featherweights. The former bantamweight titlist entered the 122-pound ratings after a splendid performance against veteran Eric Morel in April. Steve Molitor's only activity since last year's State of the Game was a split decision over Sebastien Gauthier; South African veteran Takalani Ndlovu, after splitting a pair with Molitor, has been uneven recently, earning a split verdict over Giovanni Caro and then dropping one to Jeffrey Mathebula; and Mathebula, another South African, avenged a previous loss to Ndlovu and earned the IBF junior featherweight belt in the process. Meanwhile, Fernando Montiel is a bit past it but still dangerous, hence our "Most Avoided" distinction.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Unlike John Molina, Rigondeaux dispensed with the long incubation process. He had only seven bouts prior to his beating Ramos and winning his first professional title belt. Granted, he'd had an extensive amateur career and won Olympic gold medals for Cuba in 2000 and 2004, so it's not as if he was some inexperienced rookie. Besides, Leon Spinks won the heavyweight crown from Muhammad Ali with only seven pro fights on his record, and 1956 Olympic gold medalist Pete Radamacher was given a title shot in his professional debut against then-champion Floyd Patterson. Radamacher lost, but the bout garnered a lot of attention. Anyway, let's see if Rigondeaux has a longer title reign than "Neon Leon." All the Cuban has to do is make one successful title defense. He'll get that chance in June against Teon Kennedy in Las Vegas.

## JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Nonito Donaire

**BEST BOXER**
Guillermo Rigondeaux

**MOST PROTECTED**
Jayson Velez

**MOST AVOIDED**
Fernando Montiel

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Cruz Carbajal

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Nonito Donaire-Guillermo Rigondeaux

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Toshiaki Nishioka

**ON THE WAY UP**
Scott Quigg

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Fernando Beltran

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Jorge Arce KO 12 Wilfredo Vazquez Jr.

# THE STATE OF THE GAME BANTAMWEIGHT

**Anselmo Moreno** (right) looked all but unbeatable against **David De La Mora** on April 21. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

Anselmo Moreno is now the man to beat at 118 pounds, particularly with Abner Mares having moved up a weight class. The slick-boxing Panamanian hasn't lost a fight since dropping a four-rounder on points to Ricardo Molina in 2002 and avenged that one by knockout. His dominating ninth-round knockout of David De La Mora in April, his most-recent fight, led some experts to suggest he belongs on pound-for-pound lists.

Next on the list now is Joseph Agbeko, who performed gallantly in the recent Showtime bantamweight tournament but had lost his two fights (both to Mares) going into a scheduled bout with journeyman Michael Doingo in Agbeko's home country of Ghana. Vic Darchinyan continued his downslide by losing a decision to Shinsuke Yamanaka. Darchinyan is at a crossroads in his career: He is in a cycle of good performances followed by bad ones. At his age there is no telling what he can accomplish, but as the old adage goes, the last thing to go on a fighter is his punch, and crazy-eyed Vic will be able to punch out little men until he's 80. True, he doesn't have the terrifying power at 118 that he had at flyweight, but we doubt there's a man on the planet who would stand still and let Darchinyan hit him in the mouth.

Morel, 36, said after his one-sided loss to Mares for the vacant WBC junior featherweight title that he'll most likely fight at a more-comfortable 118 pounds. He looked good enough against Mares to merit respect at the lower weight. Former IBF titlist Yonnhy Perez has been inactive for a year after losing on a head-butt cut to Darchinyan. After two losses and a draw, he'll need something impressive to live up to his initial promise. Perez announced his retirement but we're not convinced he means it. Malcolm "Eagle Eye" Tunacao of the Philippines is 34 but has yet to really catch fire, and he's not going to if he keeps fighting soft opponents, such as his most recent victim, Yuki Takemoto, who had 15 losses on his record. Koki Kameda is still clinging to his WBA title. In April he retained his laurels with a unanimous decision over Indonesian fighter Nouldie Manakane.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Who would've thought that after the drubbing he took from Darchinyan a few years ago that Jorge Arce would still be a force. In fact, it's Arce who seems to have found a second wind, particularly with his stunning stoppage of Wilfredo Vazquez Jr., while Darchinyan seems on the way out. But WBO titlist Arce may not be long for the bantams, for he has already fought successfully at junior featherweight and may be seeking a big showdown with Nonito Donaire in the near future. That would be a fine way to cap off a long and colorful career, win or lose. (And a win would be a nice way for him to thumb his nose at Darchinyan, who was quite memorably clobbered by Donaire a while back.)

## BANTAMWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Jorge Arce

**BEST BOXER**
Anselmo Moreno

**MOST PROTECTED**
Leo Santa Cruz

**MOST AVOIDED**
Anselmo Moreno

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Malcolm Tunacao

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Anselmo Moreno-Jorge Arce

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
AJ Banal

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Jorge Arce

**ON THE WAY UP**
Shinsuke Yamanaka

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Vic Darchinyan

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Hugo Ruiz W 12 Francisco Arce

# JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT

**Tepparith Singwancha** (right) celebrates his victory over **Tomonobu Shimizu.** Image: **Kazuhiro Nogi-AFP-Getty Images**

Shame on Omar Narvaez for his non-performance against Nonito Donaire. Granted, the 36-year-old Narvaez has been a handy little fellow for many years, with a win over contender Cesar Seda, but that one bad night against Donaire nearly undid all of the quiet goodwill he'd developed over the years. At press time he was back in Argentina, set to defend against Jose Cabrera.

Meanwhile, the WBC strap changed hands a few times since last year's State of the Game, from Tomas Rojas to Suriyan Sor Rungvisai to Nobuo Nashiro to Yota Sato. Tomonobu Shimizu won the WBA title from former RING 108-pound champion Hugo Cazares, only to lose it in early April to Tepparith Singwancha, aka "Astro Boy." Singwancha was very impressive, scoring a ninth-round KO.

Also scheduled to defend that same week was IBF titlist Juan Carlos Sanchez. The 21-year-old "Zurito" won the belt by defeating Rodrigo Guerrero in February, and his first defense was to be against veteran Juan Alberto Rojas.

Overall, the junior bantamweight crew is a talented and competitive bunch, but it's hard to imagine HBO or Showtime investing in any of these fighters. Of course, the Japanese fighters can probably continue to have fine careers overseas, and we'll see them on YouTube. If you're stressed by the idea that Larry Merchant will never stand in a ring interviewing Shimizu, well, we certainly feel your pain.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** OK, let's kick Narvaez around a little bit more. Had he gone down swinging against Donaire we'd think better of him, and he would've cemented his status as one of the better little fighters of this era. After all, he's been a titlist since 2002, and he hasn't spent the decade fighting stiffs. Just think, he could've been gallant in defeat like Wilfredo Gomez against Salvador Sanchez, or Bob Foster against Joe Frazier and Muhammad Ali. Those fighters were held in higher esteem for their efforts, and the losses were not held against them. Instead, Narvaez spent 12 rounds with his gloves in front of his face, content to go the distance. OK, so maybe he isn't a puncher like Foster or Gomez, so maybe it is unfair to expect him to go out on his shield. Still, a game performance might have impressed the big cable channel, and he might have been invited back, perhaps creating a nice payday for him and his opponent. And he would've drawn attention to the weight class. Instead, there will always be the feeling that Narvaez blew it and let the team down.

## JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Cesar Seda

**BEST BOXER**
Omar Narvaez

**MOST PROTECTED**
Ryo Akaho

**MOST AVOIDED**
Carlos Quadras

**IS HE STILL AROUND**
Wandee Singwancha

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Tepperith Singwancha-Yota Sato

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Oleydong Sithsamerchai

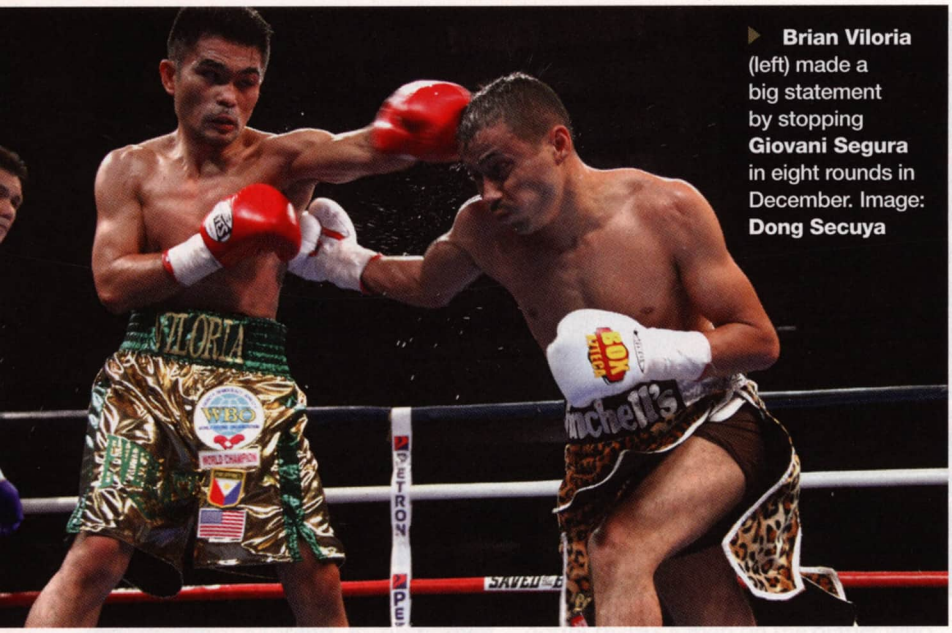
**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Hugo Cazares

**ON THE WAY UP**
Sylvester Lopez

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Feliciano Dario Azuaga Ledezma

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Tomonobu Shimizu W 12 Hugo Cazares

# THE STATE OF THE GAME FLYWEIGHT



**Brian Viloria** (left) made a big statement by stopping **Giovani Segura** in eight rounds in December. Image: **Dong Secuya**

Two big stories rocked the flyweight division in recent months. The first was last November when 31-year-old Brian Viloria, a longtime competitor who had won some belts but never quite lived up to his initial promise as a sort of "Pocket Pacquiao," scored a shocking upset by stopping the hard-hitting Giovani Segura in eight rounds to retain the WBO strap he'd won from Julio Cesar Miranda four months earlier. Viloria was scheduled to make his first defense in May against Omar Nino, a fighter who has given Viloria problems twice before. Their first bout was won by Nino (W 12). Nino also won their second, but the bout was declared a no-contest when Nino failed a drug test.

But even Viloria's upset over Segura wasn't as big an upset as when unknown journeyman Sonny Boy Jaro, a Filipino with 10 losses on his record, scored an incredible sixth-round stoppage of the legendary Pongsaklek Wonjongkam of Thailand to win THE RING championship, along with the WBC belt. At 34, with 89 fights to his credit, Wonjongkam may have finally reached the end of his career, as he was dropped five times during the bout. Jaro has two Filipino countrymen on his trail, Rocky Fuentes, who is only 26 but seems battle worn because of his hard-charging style, and Milan Melindo, an undefeated 24-year-old who claims to have fought 500 amateur bouts.

Rugged WBA titlist Hernan Marquez of Mexico could very well be the best flyweight in the world, although a weigh-in controversy caused the cancellation of his March bout with Rodel Mayol. Argentina's Juan Carlos Reveco and Japan's Toshiuki Igarashi, are strong up-and-comers who might make their presence felt in the coming year, while South Africa's Moruti Mthalane has made three successful title defenses since winning the vacant IBF belt by beating Miranda in 2009.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Marquez defended his WBA title against Luis Concepcion in October 2011. Marquez scored a first round knockout, which was anti-climactic for fans who had wanted a replay of their wild encounter from earlier in the year, when both fighters were dropped in the first round and then battled savagely until Marquez scored an 11th-round KO. But sometimes rematches simply don't live up to their predecessors. Joe Louis-Billy Conn II was a stinker in comparison to their first bout, as was Rocky Marciano-Jersey Joe Walcott II, Jose Luis Castillo-Diego Corrales II and Archie Moore-Yvon Durelle II. Marquez-Concepcion II joins the ranks of disappointing sequels.

## FLYWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Brian Viloria

**BEST BOXER**
Milan Melindo

**MOST PROTECTED**
Juan Carlos Reveco

**MOST AVOIDED**
Moruti Mthalane

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Omar Nino

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Brian Viloria-Hernan Marquez

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Toshiuki Igarashi

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Brian Viloria

**ON THE WAY UP**
Froilan Saludar

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Pongsaklek Wonjongkam

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Hernan Marquez KO 11 Luis Concepcion

# JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT

**Roman Gonzalez** (right, against **Francisco Rojas**) has all the qualities of a star ... except enough pounds. Image: **Toshifumi Kitamura-AFP-Getty Images**

The biggest news in the junior flyweight class so far in 2012 was the chair-throwing riot that broke out after Johnriel Casimero scored a 10th round KO of Luis Lazarte in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Casimero avoided getting hit with flying objects and lived to schedule a bout with veteran Sammy Gutierrez. That one was scheduled to take place in May in the Philippines, where Casimero will have home court advantage and will not have to run for cover if he wins.

While no fighter is recognized by THE RING as champion at 108, IBF titleholder Ulises Solis is our No. 1 junior flyweight by virtue of his wins last year over Jether Oliva (W 12) and Lazarte (W 12). Solis is undefeated in seven bouts since a 2009 KO loss to Brian Viloria.

Roman Gonzales of Nicaragua is the division's knockout artist, having stopped 26 of 31 opponents inside the distance. He scored a one-round body-shot KO of Manuel Jimenez back in March, and at press time was preparing to defend his WBA belt against Ramon Hirales in Mexico. At 24, the heavy-handed Gonzalez could be on the verge of a big future. Well, as big a future as a junior flyweight can have, that is. We're still waiting for a Michael Carbajal type to bring some mainstream attention to this division. Hirales dropped a decision to WBO titlist Donnie Nietes last October.

Kompayak Porpramook of Thailand gained a lot of attention, as well as the WBC title, with his incredible win over Adrian Hernandez last year (KO 10). A defense of his belt against Jonathan Taconing was set for May. Japan's Masayuki Kuroda was held to a 10-round draw by Ryoichi Taguchi in March, while countryman Ryo Miyazaki remains unbeaten after 16 bouts.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Gilberto Keb Baas was still rated at No. 10 as of press time, which is quite an accomplishment considering he has 22 losses on his record. He has lost his last two bouts, and has more losses than the other nine rated junior flyweights combined.

## JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Roman Gonzalez

**BEST BOXER**
Ulises Solis

**MOST PROTECTED**
Donnie Nietes

**MOST AVOIDED**
Roman Gonzalez

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Gilberto Keb Baas

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Roman Gonzalez-K. Porpramook

**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Johnriel Casimero

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Roman Gonzalez

**ON THE WAY UP**
Johnriel Casimero

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Luis Lazarte

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
K. Porpramook KO 10 Adrian Hernandez

# THE STATE OF THE GAME STRAWWEIGHT

**Kazuto Ioka** of Japan has made a lot of noise very quickly. Image: **Sankei-Getty Images**

Nkosinathi Joyi of South Africa, our top-rated strawweight, successfully defended the IBF belt on March 30, defeating well-regarded Katsunari Takayama on points at the Orient Theater in East London. Considering Joyi has been on a schedule of one fight per year since 2009, (and only one in 2007) that was probably it for him in 2012.

Joyi won the belt in 2010 from Raul Garcia, who was on a successful rebound until losing to Moises Fuentes last year. Fuentes, now recognized as the WBO titleholder, was scheduled to face ex-titlist Ivan Calderon on April 28, while WBC boss Kazuto Ioka finished up 2011 by making his second defense, defeating Yodgoen Tor Chalermchai (KO 1).

Ioka, incidentally, won his belt in only his seventh pro bout. He was scheduled to face the winner of an upcoming bout between Denver Cuello and Ganigan Lopez, although it was announced in April that a title-unification bout was in the works between Ioka and Akira Yaegashi, which happens to be our "Matchmaker's Dream" selection in the sidebar. Perhaps this particular dream is coming true. Yaegashi loudly announced his presence last year by winning the WBA strawweight title from Pornsawan Porpramook in one of the best fights of 2011 (KO 10).

The rest of THE RING's strawweight class is made up of warhorses Juan Palacios and Florante Condes, and youngblood Wanheng Menayothin.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Calderon, who began his career as a junior flyweight and dropped to strawweight, came as close as any lighter-division fighter in recent years to attaining anything like mainstream success. This was due mostly (OK, just about entirely) to his Puerto Rican background. Top Rank, always ready to grab a talented Puerto Rican fighter, promoted him well, putting him on Latin Fury pay-per-view shows and even a couple of Madison Square Garden events in New York. The likelihood of such a thing happening with any of the current strawweights is zero. Can you imagine Bob Arum saying, "Get Nkosinathi Joyi on the phone. Let's put him on the undercard of the next Yankee Stadium show." We can't.

## STRAWWEIGHT

**BEST PUNCHER**
Juan Palacios

**BEST BOXER**
Nkosinathi Joyi

**MOST PROTECTED**
Merlito Sabillo

**MOST AVOIDED**
Nkosinathi Joyi

**IS HE STILL AROUND?**
Muhammad Rachman

**MATCHMAKER'S DREAM**
Kazuto Ioka-Akira Yaegashi

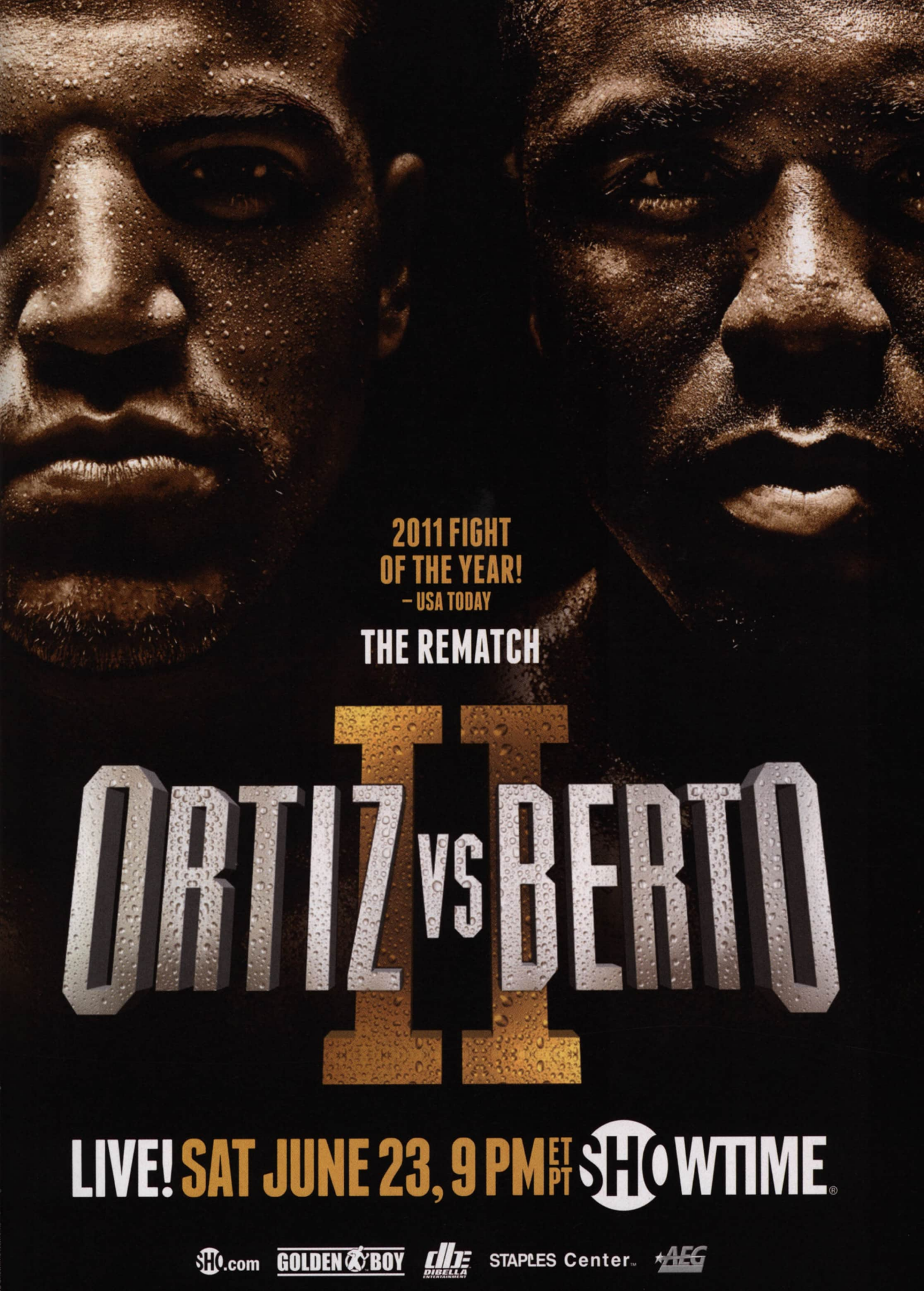
**DESERVES A TITLE SHOT**
Mario Rodriguez

**MOST FUN TO WATCH**
Akira Yaegashi

**ON THE WAY UP**
Paipharob Kokietgym

**ON THE WAY DOWN**
Ivan Calderon

**BEST FIGHT IN 2011**
Akira Yaegashi KO 10 Pornsawan Porpramook


2011 FIGHT
OF THE YEAR!
– USA TODAY
THE REMATCH
ORTIZ VS BERTO II
LIVE! SAT JUNE 23, 9 PM ET PT
SHOWTIME
SHO.com
GOLDEN BOY
DIBELLA ENTERTAINMENT
STAPLES Center
AEG

# SO LONG TO A TRUE ORIGINAL

## BERT SUGAR: 1937-2012

By **Bernard Fernandez**

The 21st century is proving to be a lonely place for the few remaining eccentrics who were so seemingly plentiful 75 to 100 years earlier. Instead of inspired originality, we are now presented with pre-fab, made-for-television "personalities" who come across as more fake than Pamela Anderson's surgically enhanced bosom.

The great sportscaster, Bob Costas, once referred to Bert Randolph Sugar as "Runyonesque," a reference to author/newspaperman Damon Runyon, who was 66 when he died on Dec. 10, 1946. It was meant as a compliment; there once was a time when that particular adjective evoked vivid memories of the many distinctive characters, real and fictional, that inhabited Runyon's world. They were horse players, boxers, gamblers and other-side-of-the-track hustlers, who almost never went by their birth names but by such *nom de guerres* as Harry the Horse, Good Time Charley, Dave the Dude and Big Jule.

Bert Sugar was 9 years old when Damon Runyon passed on, so the intersection of their lives and times was fleeting at best. And although he was later known as "The Hat," for his refusal to be seen in public without his trademark wide-brimmed fedoras or straw Panamas, Sugar did not fit the classic description of a Runyonesque character; he was a patrician son of privilege, a member of Virginia's socially prominent Randolph family, who would go on to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland and MBA and JD degrees from the University of Michigan. He worked 10 years on Madison Avenue as an advertising account executive, which put his wide-ranging imagination to good if (to him) uninspiring use. And he probably could have tacked on another four decades in that capacity, wearing tailored business suits and striving mightily to reign in that part of his nature yearning for a freer form of personal expression.

Burt Sugar was 74 when he died of cardiac arrest on March 25, his family gathered at his side at Westchester Medical Center in Mount Kisco, N.Y. His departure from this mortal coil signals not so

The late **Bert Sugar** was always at home in the spotlight.

Image: **James Keivom-New York Daily News-Getty Images**

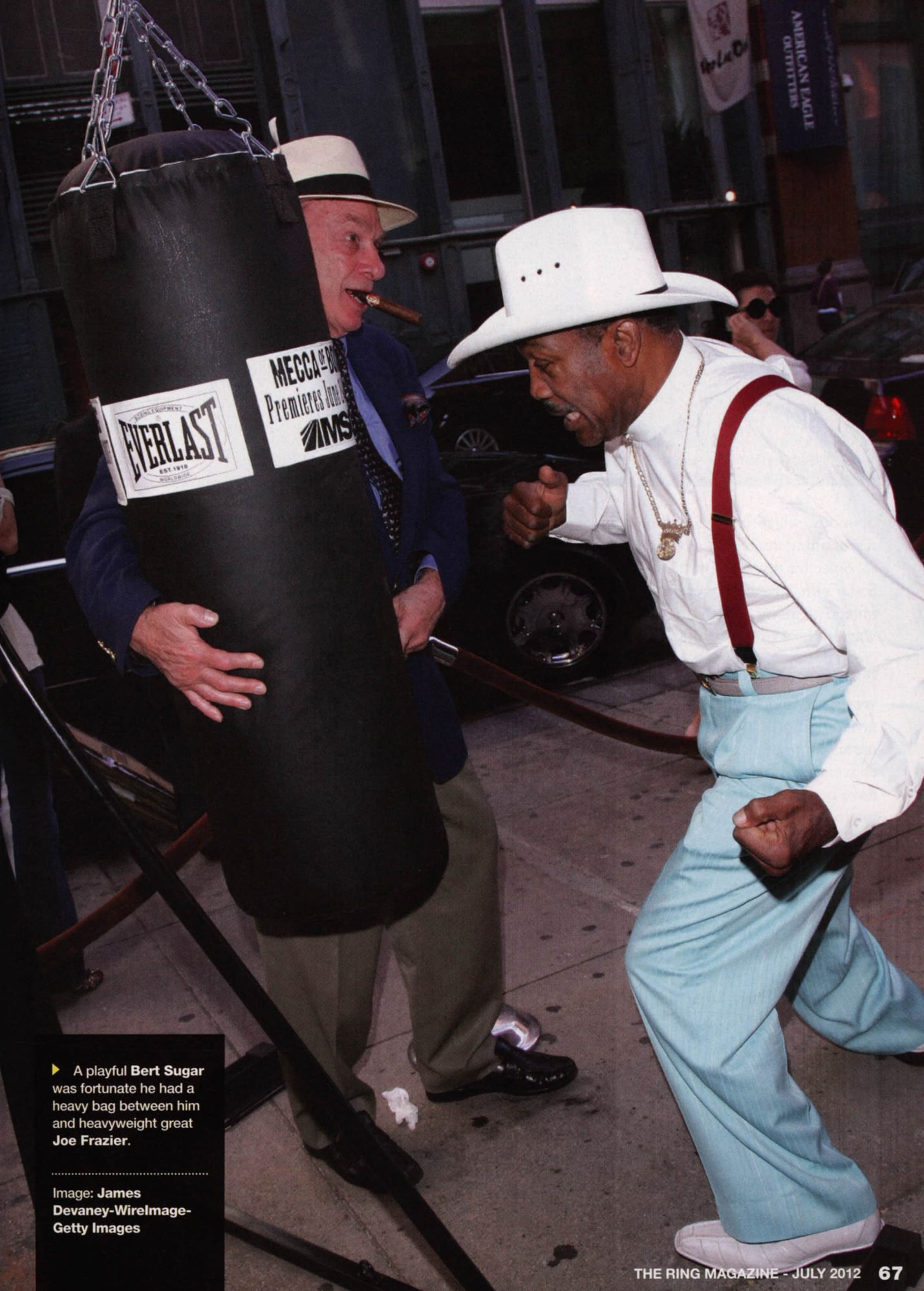
▶ The boxing world lost two icons — author and historian **Bert Sugar** (left) and trainer **Angelo Dundee** — within a span of two months. Image: **Jeff Julian**

much the end of the last of the Runyonesque characters, which once were in such long supply, but a sad farewell to one of the last of those who might be described as Sugaresque, a decidedly less numerous breed. Coming as it did, in reasonably close proximity to the deaths of boxing icons Angelo Dundee, Butch Lewis and Lorraine Chargin, the fight game suddenly seems a more sterile and less interesting place. Those few remaining members of the one-of-a-kind club — Don Elbaum, Lou Duva and Don King — are hereby advised to get their rest, take all prescribed medications and maybe lay off of the 86-proof beverages and tobacco products that perhaps hastened Bert's demise.

I knew (and liked) Bert Randolph Sugar, both professionally and personally. As the boxing writer for the *Philadelphia Daily News* for 28 years, I had frequent occasion to call upon his encyclopedic knowledge dating back to the sport's bare-knuckled origins. The author of 80 or so books, and blessed with the sort of instant recall that would have made him a tough-to-beat contestant on *Jeopardy*, he, and the late Hank Kaplan, provided me with the surest, swiftest portals into those eras that predated my own late-1950s introduction to the sport, when as a child I watched, transfixed, the *Gillette Cavalcade of Sports* in my native New Orleans with my father, a former pro welterweight. Bert and Hank never hesitated to help those in need of a handy fact or a point of reference, which made them all the more cherished by those who understand that the sharing of information is hardly a given.

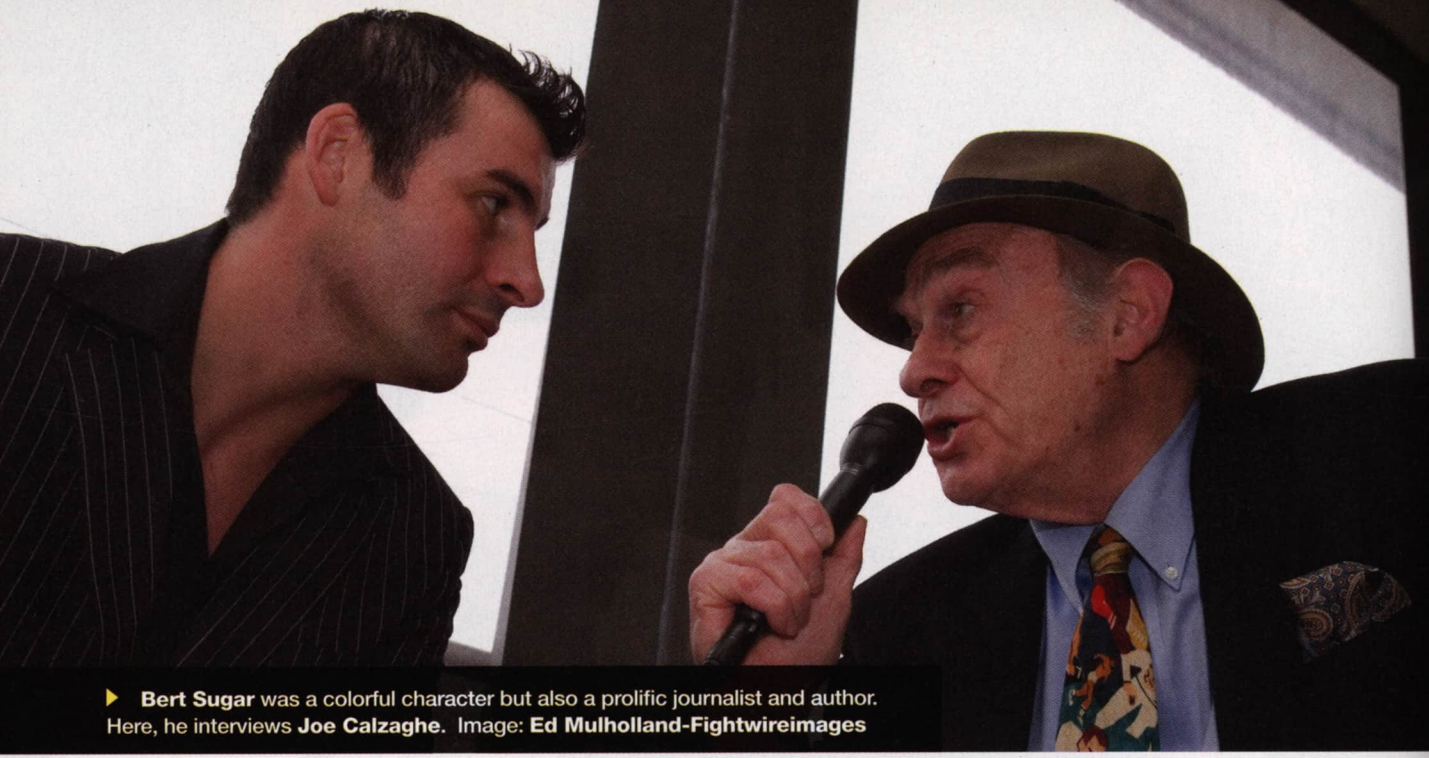
And when I wasn't picking Bert's brain for information, I enjoyed his company, which he also was quick to share not only with colleagues, but with any fight fan who would come up to request an autograph, a photo or one of the thousands of anecdotes he could pull out of his memory bank with the speed of a high-quality computer. Ask Bert for a minute of his time and a total stranger might be treated to an hour or two of one-man theater, The Hat rambling on like a mighty river rolling toward the sea.

Bert — who was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2005 – loved barroom debates, which perhaps explains why so many of his books were compilations of lists: the 100 greatest athletes, 50 greatest baseball games, 100 greatest boxers and what have you. He knew that his opinions, although backed up with a raft of statistics and personal observations, were sure to spark dissenting




A playful **Bert Sugar** was fortunate he had a heavy bag between him and heavyweight great **Joe Frazier**.

Image: **James Devaney-WireImage-Getty Images**



▶ **Bert Sugar** was a colorful character but also a prolific journalist and author. Here, he interviews **Joe Calzaghe.** Image: **Ed Mulholland-Fightwireimages**

opinions, which is the lifeblood of maintaining interest in any topic.

Since his death, the facts of Bert Sugar's life have been presented like mileposts along a memorial highway. In the 1960s, it is said that he created the Nestles ad campaign ("N-e-s-t-l-e-s, Nestles makes the very best choc-late") that had a generation of kids beseeching their moms to purchase the ubiquitous chocolate-milk powder. Bert might have continued to think up catchy jingles, but legend has it that his advertising career came to an end when, in a fit of pique, he grabbed his boss and tossed him through a window. Maybe that is an exaggeration, maybe it was only a slight push, but the more aggressive version of the story does seem to provide the perfect launching pad for Bert's entry into boxing, where disagreements can be settled in the ring and the cult of personality can take root in the form of *film noir* hats, unbelievably loud pants and brandished cigars the size of small baseball bats.

In 1969 Bert bought *Boxing Illustrated*, for which he served as editor until 1973. He was editor and publisher of THE RING from 1979-83, later taking on second terms with both *Boxing Illustrated* and THE RING. All the while he continued to churn out books, some of which dealt with his other sporting love, baseball, as well as a biography of the renowned magician Harry Houdini, while creating and embellishing a persona as unique as anything to spring from the fertile imagination and real-life adventures of Damon Runyon.

The popular perception of Bert Sugar is that of the everyman who rose above his circumstances, as is so often the case with boxing, whose greats are almost always forged in the crucible of a hard-scrabble existence. But Bert was aptly described by his daughter, Jennifer Frawley, as a "brilliant man" whose wit, intelligence and sense of humor, as well as his eccentricities and ability to connect with the public, made him more accessible than some standard egghead with a boxing jones. What fight fan couldn't relate to someone whose business cards listed his "office in exile" as O'Reilly's Pub in Manhattan, where, the *Washington Post* once observed, "he wrote columns on a typewriter in a back booth."

But while his manner was gregarious and outgoing, his sharp, lucid mind was most evident on those occasions when he sought to bring gravitas to a subject, as was the case in an essay on the early 20th-century heavyweight champion, Jack Johnson.

"In the world of the early 1900s," he wrote, "still awash with Victorian gentility and doily-type embroidery on everything from manners and mode to conversation and conventional heroes, the name of the heavyweight champion stood out in stark relief, a man of swaggering visibility who epitomized the turbulent yet proud surety of the populace of a nation destined for greatness."

Goodbye, Bert. Needless to say, you will be missed by your many friends and the tens of thousands more who never actually met you but probably felt as though they knew you anyway. That is a gift bestowed on a very select few, regardless of which side of the tracks they came from. ■

One thing those close to **Bert Sugar** will remember about him is his zest for life.

Image: **Paul Andrew Hawthorne-WireImage-Getty Images**

**Bert Sugar** was proud of his **International Boxing Hall of Fame** ring. He was inducted in 2005, when this photo was taken.

Image: **Jeff Julian**

# TRUE TO FORM UNTIL THE END

## BERT SUGAR WAS TYPICALLY ENGAGING DURING ONE OF HIS FINAL INTERVIEWS

By **Don Stradley**

*Don Stradley recently interviewed Bert Sugar for our Looking Ahead feature, believing that the noted author was on his way to recovery after a bout with cancer and would return to work. However, on March 25, Sugar died of cardiac arrest.*

His voice lacked its distinctive roar, but Bert Sugar was still talkative. It was the middle of March, two weeks before his death, and we had called to see how he was doing. He sounded upbeat. For one thing, he was feeling better. Also, he had just introduced his grandson to the films of The Marx Brothers. If you knew Bert well, talk would eventually get around to The Marx Brothers. He'd loved them and could sometimes be caught humming a tune from one of their films as he leafed through papers on his desk. Many of the jokes and one-liners Bert used were actually borrowed from their films. If you reminded him of this, he'd break into a demented grin and wag his cigar through clenched teeth, as if all was fair when you were running for mayor of boxing.

He had been through a grueling five months of cancer treatments, and although he didn't expect to ever again be the swaggering Bert Sugar of old, he was gradually making his way back. The first step had been a quick segment for ESPN2 on the passing of Angelo Dundee and Goody Petronelli. Too ill to visit the studio, he allowed the camera crew into his Chappaqua home.

Was it an inconvenience?

"Not really," Bert told THE RING. "My biggest challenge was to find my hat. I certainly wasn't going to the studio, that's for sure. But they needed someone to talk about Angelo and Goody. We also lost Don Fullmer around that same time. Good middleweight. Did you know he was the last fighter to appear on the Gillette Fights on ABC? He was on their final broadcast. I don't know who the hell he fought, but that's a good trivia question."

To our relief, he sounded much better than he had when we spoke to him in January. Back then he'd sounded weak and couldn't stay focused. In March, though, he was almost back to his old self. Here is some of what he said:

"I'm just glad to be out of the hospital. They fried me like a piece of bacon. Radiation is exhausting, and it leaves you feeling itchy. The medication has residual effects; it's a long recovery. I was fed nothing but green Jell-O, and they kept testing me for this or that. I wouldn't recommend this to anybody. In fact, if this is on your list of things to do, I'd suggest you take it off your bucket list immediately. It *is* 'the bucket.' But I'm getting better every day. I'll be back in a few months, and I'll be ready to kick ass.

"I have some trouble getting around, but that's improving little by little. I miss my cigars. And I need some new jokes. I'm telling jokes that weren't funny when I first heard them 60 years ago. But I have enjoyed hearing from friends. Just before you called I heard from Elliot Gould and Mike Tyson. Mike said, 'Y'all get better soon, ya hear?' I think that's what he said. I'm in a haze from all of this bullshit. Basically, I watch a lot of television, and people from the hospital occasionally come in to annoy me. I enjoy visits from my children and grandchildren. My bride is always here. She's the boss. And boss spelled backwards is double S-O-B.

"I'm gathering stories for another book. It's a mix of old stuff and new. That is, if I can find everything. My writing room is such a mess, if I drop something it has only a 50/50 chance of hitting the floor.

"I just sold a story to *Smoke* magazine, by the way. It was about my days as an autograph collector. When I was 12 years old I sent a letter to Francis Ouimet, the father of American golf, who won the U.S. Open in 1913. I was fascinated by him, and asked if he would sign something for me. He was kind enough to send an autograph and a very sweet letter, which I still have. He said, 'I hope to someday read about you on the sports scene.' I'd say he had some prescience, wouldn't you? I wanted to write about that. It was my first one since getting out of the hospital. I have what the French call *'L'esprit de l'escalier,'* or 'the spirit on the staircase.' It's the sense of anxiety that you should have done something different. But I did as well as could be done.

"I won't be going to any more fights. I'm not missing anything. The people on press row are not as fun as they used to be. It's a different culture now. They used to be more hell-bent. I remember staggering into hotels at three in the morning, grabbing strangers to form a barbershop quartet in the lobby. Now the guys just go back to their rooms, drink a glass of milk and count up their frequent flyer miles. But I would like to go to Las Vegas in May to see Mayweather fight what's his name. I'd like to go, but it's the doctor's call, not mine.

"Mayweather is the best defensive fighter we've had in 25 years, even if he has to fight wearing a court ordered ankle bracelet. The shoulder roll he uses has been around. James Toney used to use it. Another one was Randy Turpin. Where did Floyd learn it? His father trained him when he was a kid. Did his father teach him that? That'd be a good question to ask, except he wouldn't give a straight answer. He'd say he invented it. That style is probably enough to beat Pacquiao, if he can withstand Pacquiao, but they'll never fight. I've been saying this for two years. I don't know if Manny has slipped. If he has, it's because he discovered karaoke. Have we ever thanked the Japanese for introducing that to the world?"

Bert felt certain he'd be cleared for traveling, although a sudden spell of internal bleeding landed him back in the hospital on, of all days, Super Bowl Sunday.

"I had a rooting interest in the Patriots, because Tom Brady went to Michigan. So as I was being taken to the emergency room, I said, 'Gang, wait. Let's do this at half-time.' As Groucho Marx once said, you are only as young as the girl you feel, and I wasn't particularly interested in seeing 53-year-old Madonna perform. But I couldn't change their

**Bert Sugar** had a special connection with many fighters, including the great **Azumah Nelson**. Image: **Jeff Julian**

**Bert Sugar** was a favorite of everyone in the boxing world, including the fans.

Image: **Jeff Julian**

minds. The doctors checked me out and sent me home, just in time to see Madonna, the hag."

The conversation veered away from sports and back to when Bert was the editor of *Argosy*, a men's adventure magazine. His connection to *Argosy* had led to his being hired as a consultant on *Jaws*.

"*Argosy* usually had a shark or a deep sea diver on the cover, so they thought I must be an expert. I wrote a spec-script. Nothing came of it. But I had a few free meals on Martha's Vineyard."

Then it was back to The Marx Brothers. As the conversation came to an end, Bert treated us to a few bars of 'Hello, I Must Be Going,' a whimsical ditty by Bert Kalmer and Harry Ruby that was featured in *Animal Crackers* and later became a staple of Groucho's touring act. The lyrics go:

*Hello, I must be going,*
*I cannot stay, I came to say, I must be going.*
*I'm glad I came, but just the same, I must be going.*

When Bert died he took a lot with him. ■

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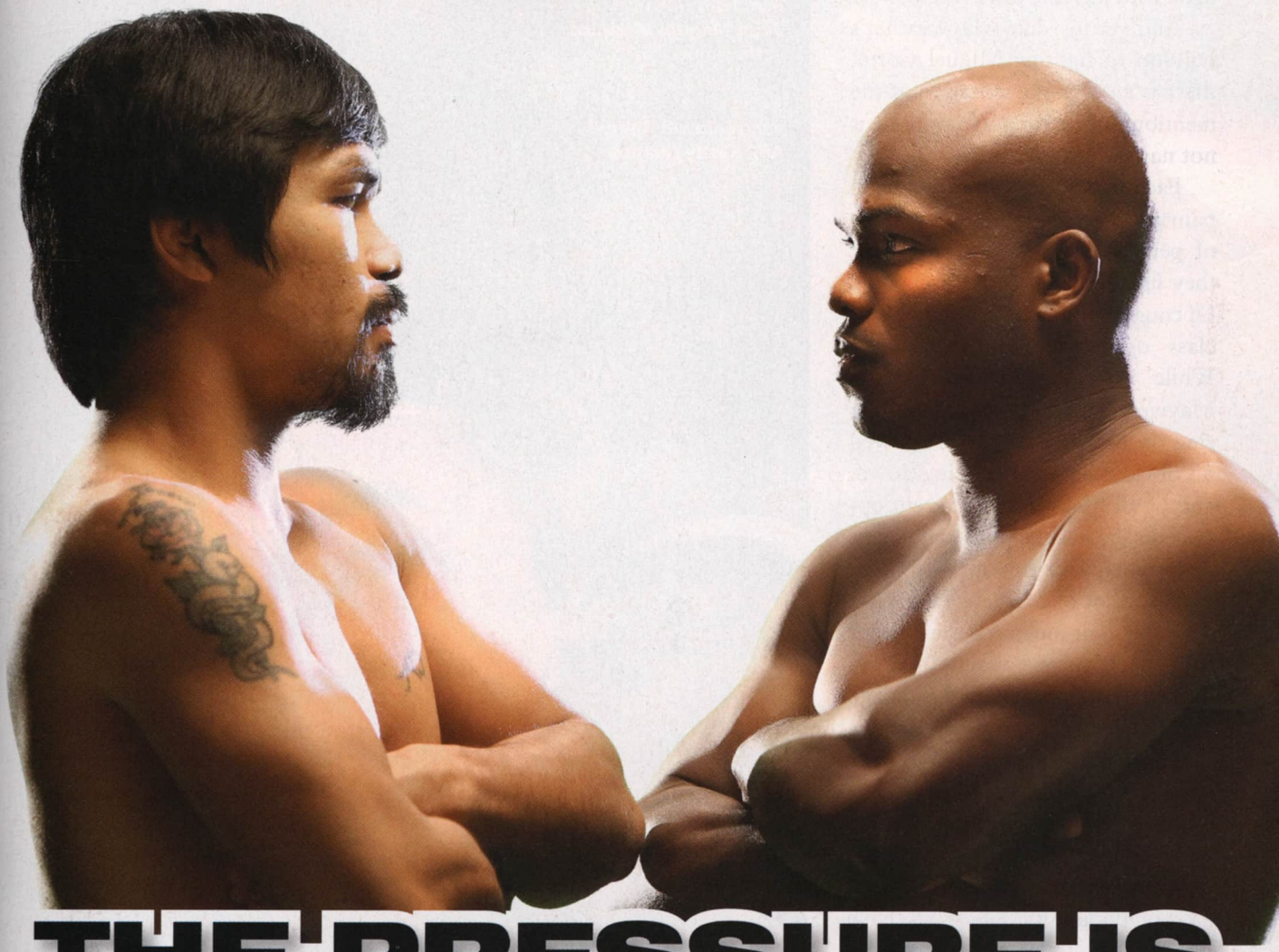


# THE PRESSURE IS ON PACQUIAO

## THE FILIPINO ICON MUST DEFEAT TIM BRADLEY CONVINCINGLY TO RESTORE HIS PRE-MARQUEZ REPUTATION

By **Gary Andrew Poole** / Photo Illustration: **Chris Farina-Top Rank**

Back in September I was invited to a lunch with Tim Bradley at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Bradley told his story and expressed his excitement about joining the boxing promotional firm Top Rank. He was fighting on the undercard of Manny Pacquiao-Juan Manuel Marquez III.

For anyone with any foresight, it was obvious that Bradley would probably be Pacquiao's next opponent. (Pacquiao is also a Top Rank fighter.) While there was hope that Pacquiao would take on Floyd Mayweather Jr., that was (and is) still a pipe dream. Bradley expressed interest in fighting Pacquiao and the Palm Springs resident seemed like a logical choice, being American, worthy of the challenge and under contract to the same promoter. Is he a threat to Pacquiao? The Pacman will be heavily favored (I believe he will win, too), but young gun Bradley is certainly no pushover and his

awkward style could give Pacquiao some problems, especially if the fight goes into the later rounds.

And yet just like Mayweather's buildup to fighting Miguel Cotto, there is a collective irritation at the mention of any Pacquiao opponent not named Mayweather.

Pacquiao and Mayweather have painted themselves into a corner of perception in which whomever they fight seems like a club fighter. Of course, Miguel Cotto is a world-class opponent for Mayweather. While I am writing this before Mayweather and Cotto enter the ring on May 5, Cotto has showed no obvious signs of slowing down, and of all Mayweather's recent opponents, he has the potential to create problems for Junior.

But what of Bradley? And what does the fight mean for the current state of Manny Pacquiao's reputation? If he wins, will his image experience a resurrection after his difficult outing against Marquez? If he loses, will his amazing run as a boxer-politician-pop culture icon be derailed?

There are reasons for Bradley's lack of popularity. His fights have not always been well marketed. Some were comical, such as his clash with Devon Alexander in a cold and empty Silverdome in Pontiac, Mich. Bradley has had trouble attracting fans in his hometown, and has only fought in Las Vegas once in his career. Top Rank is working to groom and sell Bradley as an attraction. But that will mostly come from showing well against Pacquiao. Right now Bradley has little name recognition outside of boxing, and is mostly known by casual fans for what seems to be chronic head-butting. (Hopefully, this doesn't happen against Pacquiao, but it could because the Filipino typically lunges into the pocket aggressively.) Bradley, 28, is 28-0 and the best light welterweight in the world, but he has no signature

**Manny Pacquiao** (right) wasn't his dominating self in his third fight with rival **Juan Manuel Marquez** in November.

Image: **Jewel Samad-AFP-Getty Images**

REYES
Tinkerbell
Princess
Queen

**Manny Pacquaio** must beat **Tim Bradley** convincingly to erase the doubts that emerged after he struggled to beat **Juan Manuel Marquez** in November.

Images: **Harry How-Getty** Image (right) and **Ethan Miller-Getty** Image (lower right)

wins that have brought him attention. Bradley has extra motivation because by beating Pacquiao, he will be forever remembered for it. Still, Pacquiao has a lot more to lose.

After controversially beating Marquez, Pacquiao was assailed in his own country for his performance. He came to the arena late, didn't warm up and had the look of a distracted man. While he had an incredible training camp (maybe too intense?), he couldn't seem to find himself against Marquez. Pacquiao can't just win to satisfy his contingent, he has to create a memory in the ring, to dominate, to be the Michael Jordan of boxing. Mayweather can out-slick his opponent, and that is the expectation. But Pacquiao is supposed to take huge risks and come out alive. Going forward as a boxer, he is in an impossible position.

If Pacquiao loses or draws, it would be the end of an impressive run, and it could have repercussions

for Pacquiao outside of his sporting life, breaking his air of invincibility, which has helped him in the political arena. He hasn't lost a fight since 2005. While he has fought some opponents lately (with the exception of Marquez) that were not in the realm of his incredible skills, he has plowed through some amazing fighters in his career, and his fights have been among the most-exciting contests of our era. After the Marquez fight, there were grumblings that Pacquiao is on the downhill of his career. These are the pressures of Mr. Manny Pacquiao: Future Hall of Famer Marquez fought one of the best fights of his life, lost to Pacquiao and Pacquiao was vilified by his own fanbase. Pacquiao had one off night in seven years and everyone started drafting his obituary. But it is impossible to draw a pattern from one bad evening in the ring, especially against Marquez, whose style has always been difficult for Pacquiao.

But if he has another un-Pacquiao-like outing, then he will be hit hard by what Filipinos refer to as a "crab mentality." To restore the momentum of his career back to pre-Marquez levels, Pacquiao will have to be extraordinary. Pacquiao is, as they say, a victim of his own success, of his own fairytale story: the impoverished boy, who runs away from home to make it big in the Philippines and abroad. Perhaps no fighter since Ali has had that sort of pressure. ■

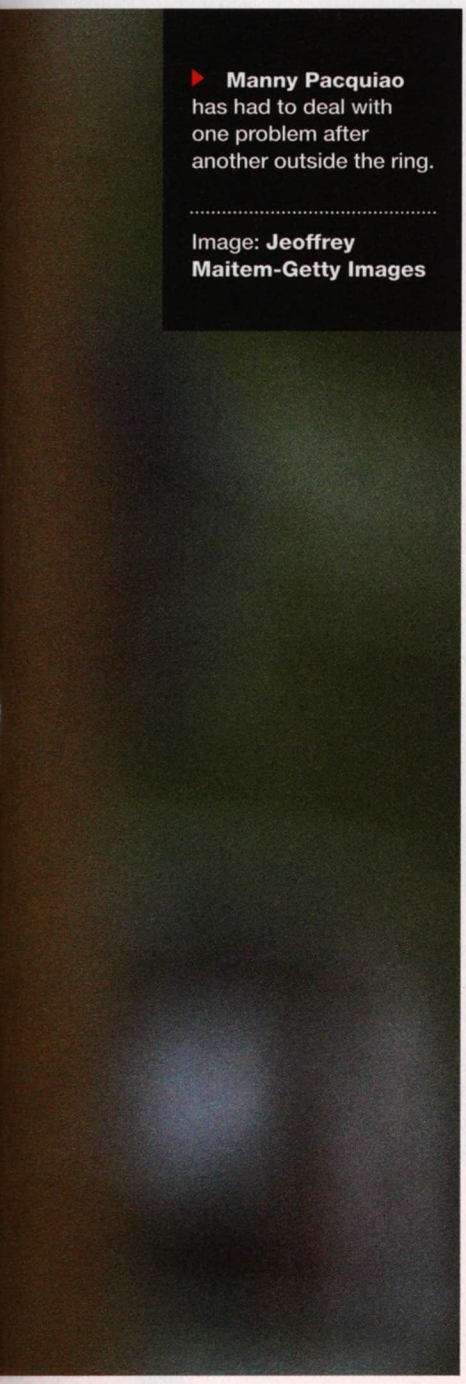
Gary Andrew Poole writes regularly for *TIME* and *Esquire*. He is the author of *PacMan: Behind The Scenes With Manny Pacquiao (Da Capo)*.

## OUT OF THE NORM

# NEW CHALLENGES

### MANNY PACQUIAO'S ISSUES WITH THE TAX MAN AND THE LAW ARE NOT SIMPLE DIVERSIONS

By: **Norm Frauenheim**



**Manny Pacquiao** has had to deal with one problem after another outside the ring.

Image: **Jeoffrey Maitem-Getty Images**

Manny Pacquiao's international stardom began with a smile. He'd make that long walk from the dressing room, up the steps and through the ropes for fights against some of the world's most dangerous men looking like a restless kid at recess. He couldn't wait to get to the playground. Pacquiao was having too much fun to be afraid. You'd smile, too. Many did.

If Pacquiao wasn't smiling, he was playing basketball. If it wasn't basketball, it was singing. If he wasn't singing with Will Ferrell, he was joking around with Jimmy Kimmel, or campaigning with Nevada Senator Harry Reid, or playing a super-hero in some Filipino film. They were called distractions by those who wondered and worried about whether there was any time left for the gym. But they weren't distractions. Not really. They were simple diversions.

Somewhere along the way, however, those diversions were shoved aside by the emergence of real distractions that aren't new, but are as dangerous now as they always have been for fighters with Pacquiao's kind of fame. From Muhammad Ali to Mike Tyson, from Sugar Ray Leonard to Oscar De La Hoya, distractions are like multiple titles. If you don't collect them, you're Joshua Clottey. You're just an opponent.

Few, if any, have been able to manage them — beat them — with any consistency. That precedent has ominous implications for the favored Pacquiao against Tim Bradley in the wake of news in early March that Filipino tax authorities, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, filed a criminal case against him for allegedly failing to provide proper documentation of his income.

In a filing with the Filipino House of Representatives, the Congressman put his net worth at $26.3 million. He has generated about $450 million in pay-per-view revenue, according to numbers released by Home Box Office and CBS/Showtime. Apparently, Filipino tax authorities are skeptical at his reported net worth. They want to know more. They have asked for 33 documents, including Pacquiao's 2010 tax return as well as earning statements from victories over Clottey and Antonio Margarito at Cowboys Stadium outside Dallas.

What's true and what's not is hard to determine, especially given Pacquiao's acknowledged generosity. He was also said to have spent millions of his own money on the campaign to win a Congressional seat. Then there are reports that his immediate ambitions include a run for governor of a Filipino province and speculation that one day he wants to be president.

It's impossible to not suspect that politics lurk beneath the murky surface of allegations suddenly confronting Pacquiao, who at least knows who he will be fighting on June 9 when he meets Bradley at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. There's no limit, no closing bell, to signal the end of a political fight, though. Politics are the potential distraction that the Congressman just can't knock out, especially in a Pacific nation with a political history so notorious that it makes the boxing business look like the March of Dimes.

At a televised news conference from the Philippines on March 26, Pacquiao wasn't smiling when he entered this fight with a vow to strike back at a case that could lead to two years in jail if found guilty.

"Plain and simple harassment," Pacquiao said from a prepared statement. "Contrary to public perception, I am not charged with tax evasion or tax fraud. That is furthest from the truth. Over the years as a boxer, a product endorser and a businessman, I have not shortchanged the government."

Distractions, however, are like Pacquiao's punches. They come in bunches and from different angles. In addition to the tax case, there's a story that Pacquiao harboured a fugitive, Mohammad "Bong" Akia, at his residence in General Santos City.

Trainer **Freddie Roach** has always helped **Manny Pacquiao** focus on boxing in spite of distractions.

Image: **Stephen Dunn-Getty Images**

**Manny Pacquiao** didn't appear to be burdened at a recent news conference, where he playfully assumed the role of photographer with opponent **Tim Bradley.** Image: **Stephen Dunn-Getty Images**

The Minda News reported that Akia, ex-chief of the Filipino Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group, was wanted by police for an alleged sale of a stolen vehicle. The newspaper linked him to a car-theft ring. According to the paper, witnesses saw Akia with Pacquiao on a flight from Manila to General Santos City. Pacquiao promised to sue for libel.

Then, there's The Manny Pacquiao Foundation, a charity that attempted to ship aid from the U.S. to the Philippines. One shipment allegedly contained used clothes, which under Filipino law is not considered a "relief good." That means the shipment is subject to an excise tax. Filipino customs impounded it.

The clothes are sitting in a ship container docked at a Filipino port. An undisclosed shipping company alleges it has not been paid. The contract reportedly includes a clause that mandates full payment even if delivery is delayed or halted by customs. Pacquiao's foundation is being sued for $35,806.36. It doesn't sound like much money, but it's just another potential distraction that might prove costly.

From fighting the taxman and to threatened legal action against a journalist, it looks as if Pacquiao will spend more time with lawyers than with singers and more time in court instead of on one. He has promised he won't be distracted from the work he'll need to do against the dangerous Bradley.

Maybe, the gym will offer him a refuge.

Maybe, a growing chorus of critics will motivate him to again be the unstoppable force he was a couple of years ago.

If there's a sign he can manage various tasks, it was there in 2010 when he won so spectacularly while pursuing his wide range of other interests.

"All the great fighters are like that," Pacquiao promoter Bob Arum

said. "Great fighters concentrate on the task at hand even though they have aspirations of fighting someone else. This is boxing. It is business. You can't always get the opponent you want. So you have to adjust and get yourself into the best shape for the fight that is before you.

"It is no joke, this boxing. This is not a romance novel where (he falls) in love with a girl then goes off and sees another woman while he is still seeing the first girl. It is not like that. Boxing is not a romance, it is a business."

Arum was talking about Juan Manuel Marquez and his pursuit of a fourth fight with Pacquiao. Before Marquez can be distracted by that possibility, however, he would first have to beat Sergei Fedchenko. Distractions have different faces and confront fighters with very different challenges.

But, again, there's an important difference between diversion and distraction. The pick-up games and show biz ventures seemed to energize Pacquiao, providing him with a restorative break from the training that can leave the mind numb and the body bruised. They kept him smiling.

Diversions were what he wanted.

He never wanted a potentially long battle with tax authorities or disputed stories that link him to a fugitive. Not long after his controversial victory by majority decision over Marquez in November, there was an acknowledgement that Pacquiao is as vulnerable to distraction as any great fighter has ever been. There was rumored marital strife. Pacquiao trainer Freddie Roach would only say that distractions hurt his training and finally caught up with him. Still, he won on the official scorecards and in the opinion of many who watched the telecast. He prevailed, although there was no celebratory song. Instead of a smile, there was evident self-doubt after a bout he called "a not so happy fight."

▶ This is the type of diversion that might do **Manny Pacquiao** some good. He was competing in a recent pro-am in the Philippines. Image: **Paul Lakatos-Asian Tour-Getty Images**

Distractions are sometimes like punches. It's not just one. It's an accumulation. One too many has led some to neglect their conditioning and others to look beyond the immediate threat in front of them. It's impossible to know whether Pacquiao has reached that threshold. Perhaps he never will. Perhaps he knows how to deal with them better than any of the legends before him. Who knows? But we do know he has two more distractions that come with unwanted attention, questions and speculation. How he deals with them will be a big part of the story before he fights Bradley. After the fight, it might explain how he won or lost. ■

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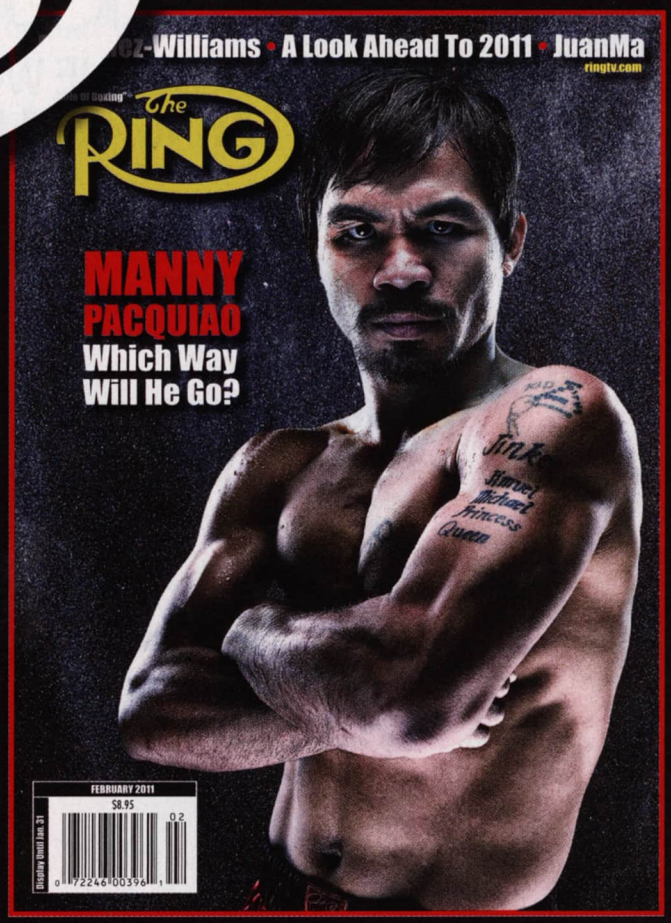


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# COMING TO FIGHT

## TIM BRADLEY PROMISES HE WON'T SHOW MANNY PACQUIAO TOO MUCH RESPECT, SAYING: "I'M NOT IN AWE OF NOBODY."

By: **Ron Borges**

Manny Pacquiao is the most popular fighter in the world because when many people look at him they don't see a fighter at all. They see a superhero.

Although he comes into the ring without a cape or a mask, that is the effect Pacquiao apparently has on many in boxing and that includes some of the men he has most recently faced, older men on the down slope who seemed to slip between the ropes without the resolve required to execute the demands of their job. Two recent examples, Joshua Clottey and Shane Mosley, come to mind but the list is growing.

Tim Bradley insists, however, that on June 9 the list will not increase regardless of whose hand is eventually raised inside the ring at the MGM

Image: **Chris Cozzone**

Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas. Manny Pacquiao may win, he seems to say, but not because he wasn't in a fight.

The undefeated WBO junior welterweight titleholder is not going to Las Vegas for a payday, as Mosley clearly did, or to take a gamble. He will not arrive intent on worshiping at the altar of a man fast becoming more legend than fighter, as Clottey chose to do at Cowboys Stadium in Texas.

Rather, Bradley is going there for one reason and one reason only. He's going there to do his job and his job is to do a job on a legend. His job is to fight, and so he promises he will.

"Everyone is human," Bradley said during a recent break in his training. "I don't see him as a god. I don't feel threatened by his ability.

"Every fighter is dangerous but every fighter is human, too. If you cut him, he'll bleed. If you hit him right, he'll go down. I know what the fight will come down to. It will come down to what it always comes down to. It comes down to his will vs. my will and his skill vs. my skill.

"On paper some people may think this fight is a joke. In reality it's a real fight. I know I'm no 6-1, 10-1 underdog. I'm not just happy to be there. I'm not in awe of nobody. I have a lot of confidence … and I'll back it up.

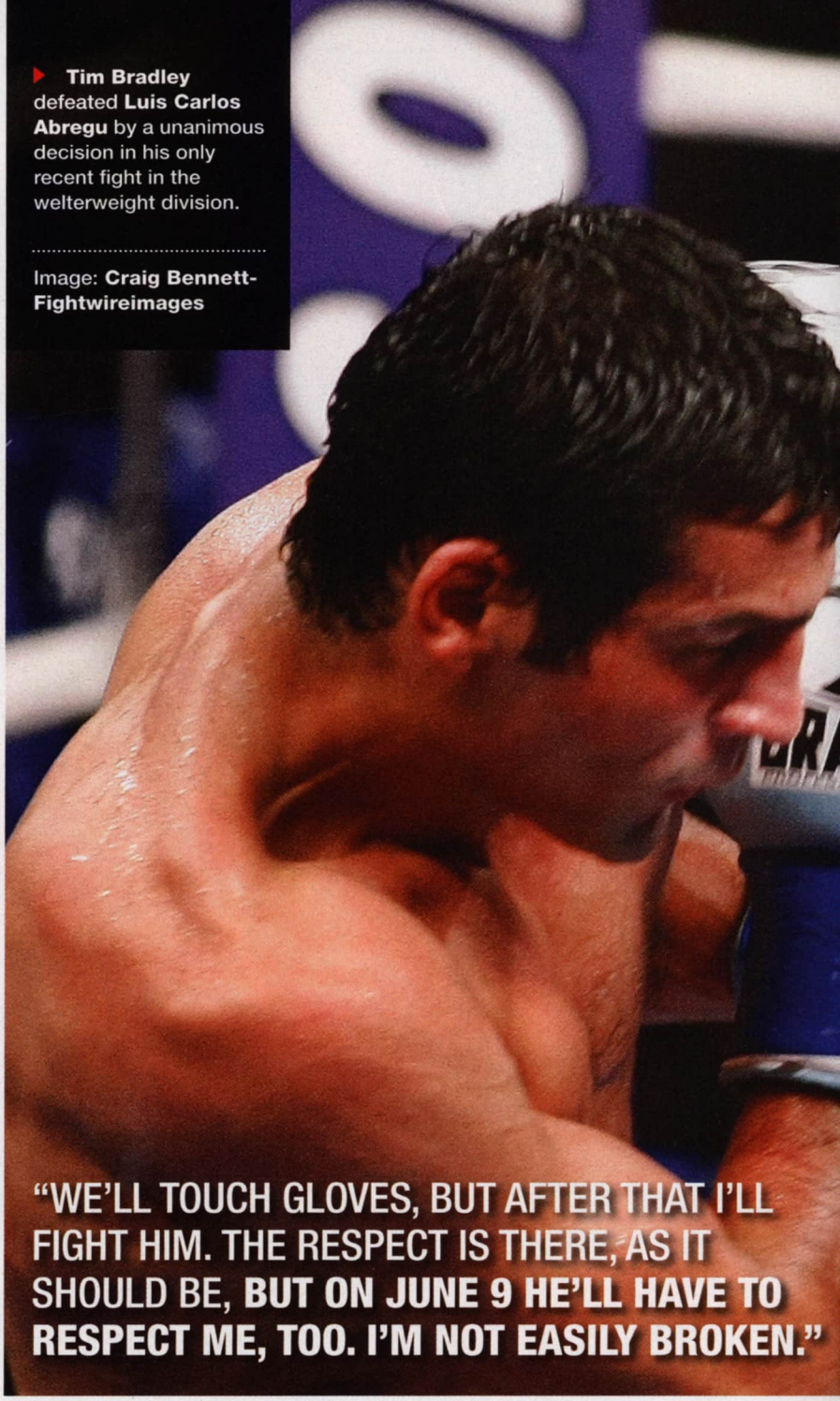
"A lot of guys get in with Pacquiao and freeze. Clottey is a much better fighter than he was the night he fought Pacquiao. He showed him too much respect. Same with Mosley. They needed to fight the dude.

"We'll touch gloves, but after that I'll fight him. The respect is there, as it should be, but on June 9 he'll have to respect me, too. I'm not easily broken."

If he were, no one would have ever heard of Tim Bradley. Slightly built, not possessed with concussive knockout power and raised far from boxing's hot beds, Bradley came up the hard way. He struggled to break through the glass ceiling that has ruined amateur boxing in America, the one that seems to decide who the U.S.' Olympians are going to be long before the fights to get there begin, and it nearly caused him to walk away from the sport.

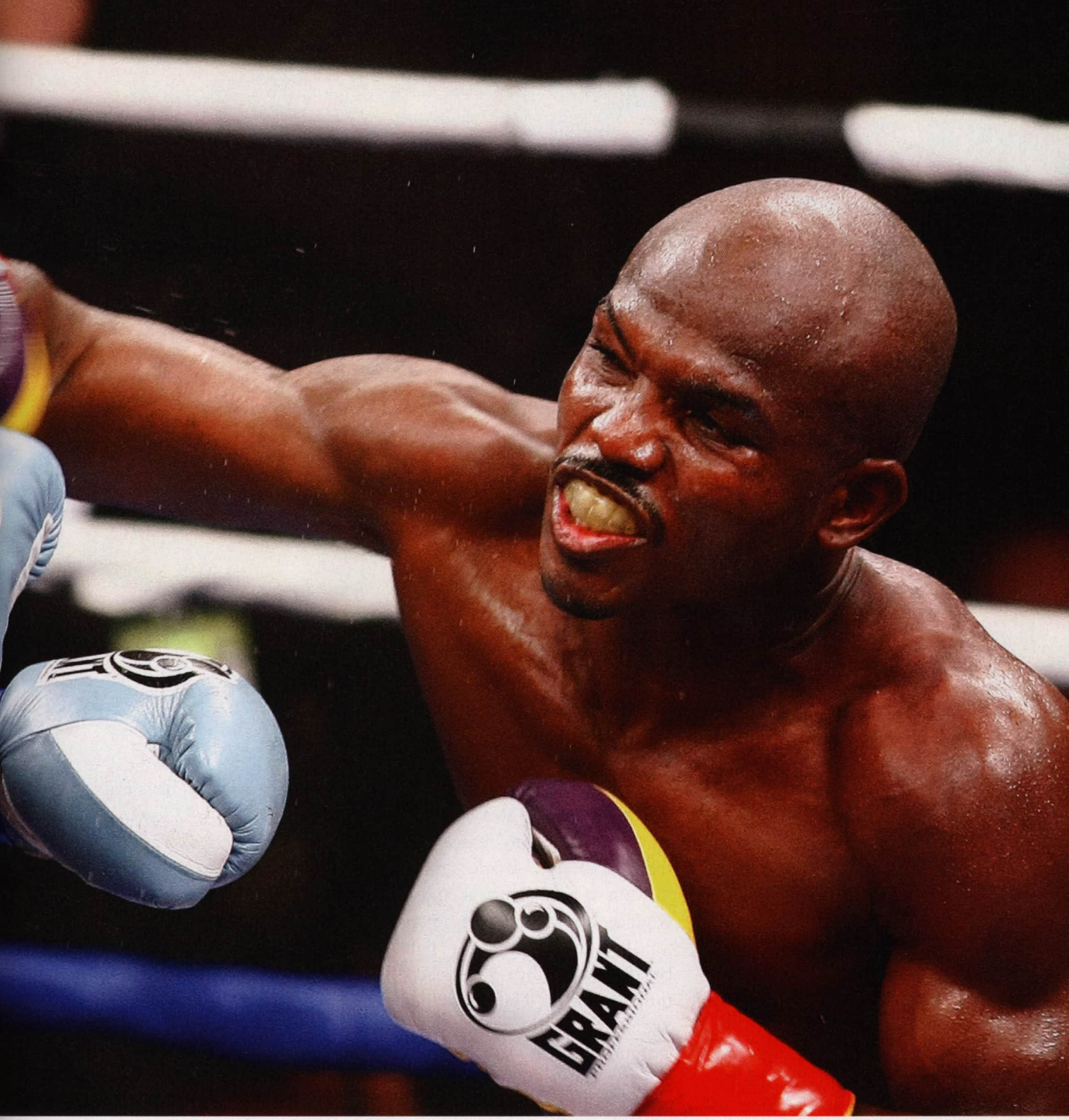
It is the only time since he first slipped his small hands into boxing gloves inside a Palm Springs gym at the age of 10 that he considered a life without boxing. That he accepted its harsh realities and pressed on to become the unified 140-pound champion says much about him and, he insists, much about how he will look at Manny Pacquiao after the first bell tolls. When it does, he believes, it will toll for him.

"It's been a hard journey," Bradley (28-0, 12 knockouts) said of his




**Tim Bradley** defeated **Luis Carlos Abregu** by a unanimous decision in his only recent fight in the welterweight division.

Image: **Craig Bennett-Fightwireimages**




career. "I been doing this 18 years. I didn't have a normal childhood. I was out on the track at 5 a.m., then go to school, do homework, go to the gym.

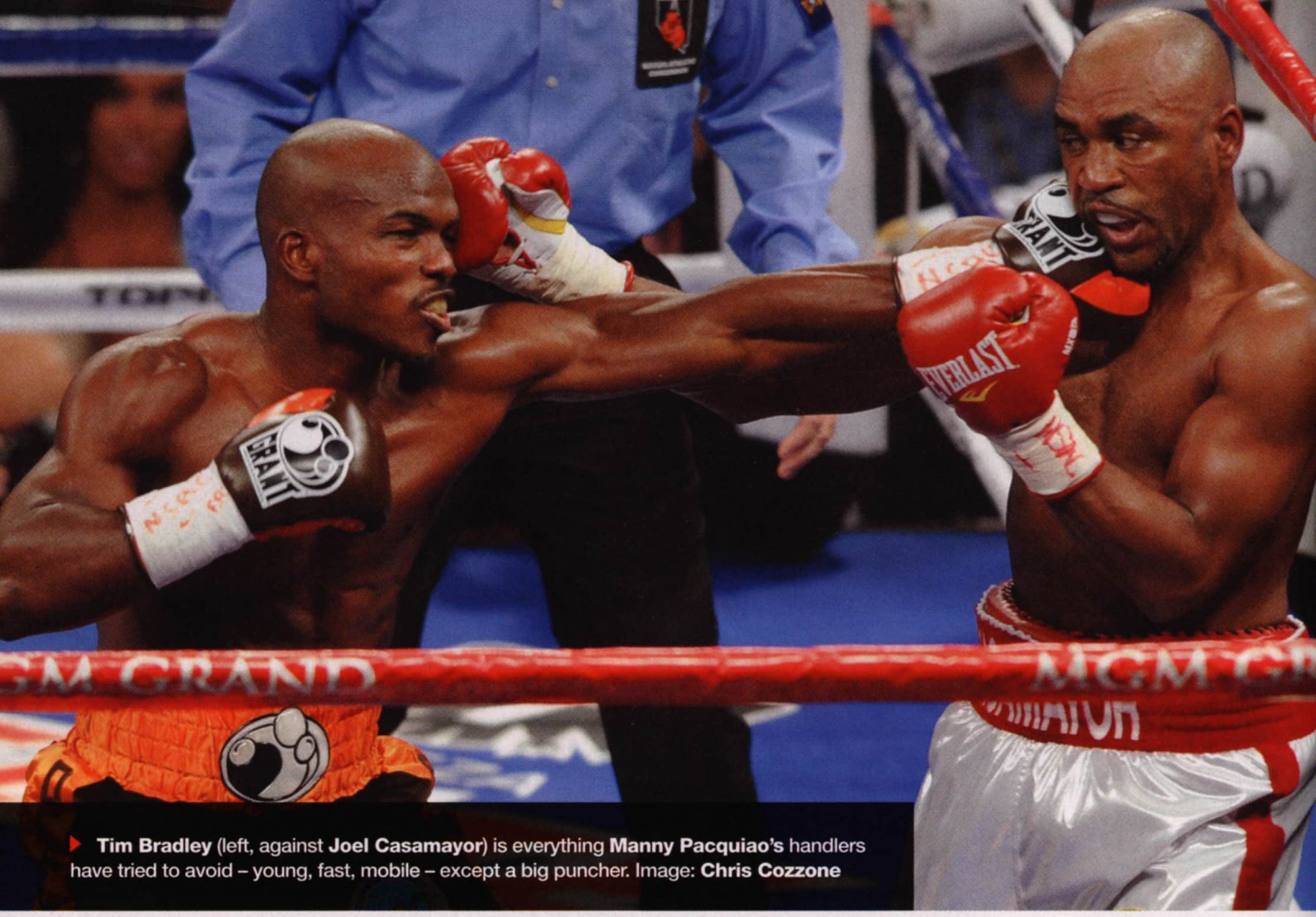
"There wasn't no movies, no dances, no hanging out with your friends. I missed a lot of school functions. But my Dad preached to me that you don't do this for fun. You strive to be the best.

"Mentally he challenged me all the time. He kept telling me that anything you want in life you got to sacrifice to get, and I believe everything my Dad told me.

"The only time I thought about quitting boxing completely I was 17, 18 and trying to make the Olympic team. I felt I got a bad decision in a qualifier tournament. You only get three opportunities to get into the Trials and to get robbed … I couldn't believe it.

"I just decided 'I'm done with this. If it's like this, I don't want to do it anymore.' That was a hard time but I bounced back."

Fortunately for boxing and perhaps unfortunately for Manny Pacquiao, Bradley listened to the counsel of his parents and pressed on, turning professional and needing only 20




**Tim Bradley** (left, against **Joel Casamayor**) is everything **Manny Pacquiao's** handlers have tried to avoid – young, fast, mobile – except a big puncher. Image: **Chris Cozzone**

fights to get his first shot at a world title. As he will be June 9, Bradley was an underdog when he climbed between the ropes at Nottingham Arena to face local hero and WBC champion Junior Witter. He left with a split-decision victory and a title he successfully defended seven times, his last a seventh-round wipeout of old warrior Joel Casamayor.

That was his debut fight for promoter Bob Arum and the unveiling of a plan that became actionable far quicker than he would have expected. Now well schooled in the black ops side of prize fighting, Bradley jumped promoters to sign with the man who has helped make Pacquiao a world hero, his thinking sage but simple.

If he wanted to fight Manny Pacquiao, he figured he had best align himself with the man promoting Pacquiao. It shouldn't have to be like that but Fantasyland exists only at the Disney theme parks. Boxing is Realityland. Hard Realityland.

"This is the only reason I signed with Top Rank," Bradley admitted. "I want to be a superstar, and this is what they do. They make superstars.

"I didn't expect the fight to be this soon, but I'm ready for the challenge. They would have avoided me if they could, but when (Miguel) Cotto signed to fight (Floyd) Mayweather I was the only one who made sense.

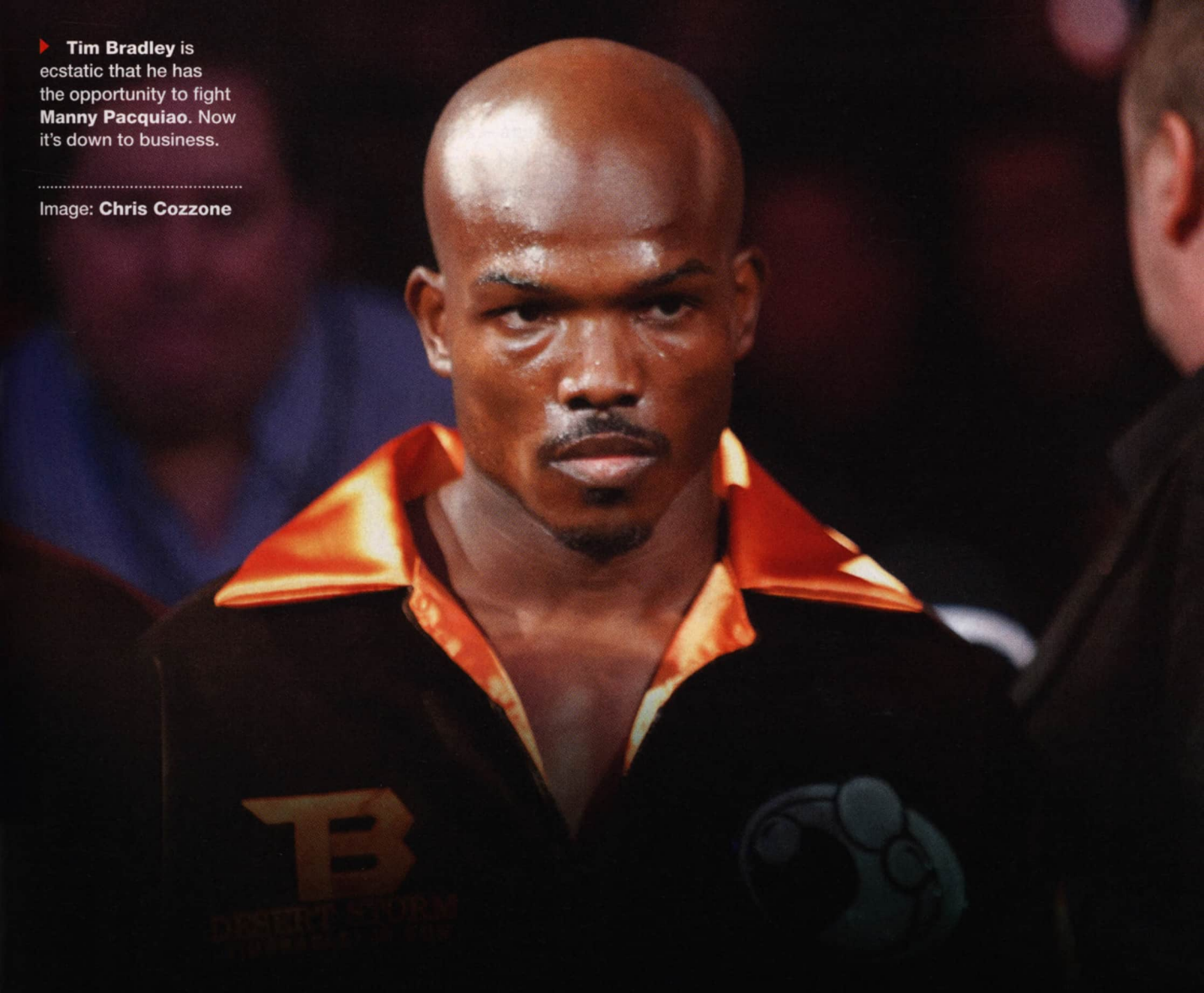
"Mayweather fought a young gun like (Victor) Ortiz and he beat him. It was time for Manny to fight one and that was me. I don't think I was their first choice. I was their last resort."

Bradley makes a good point. He is everything Pacquiao's people have been trying to avoid of late. He is young when they prefer old. He is fast when they prefer plodding. He moves when they prefer stationary targets.

The one thing he is not is a hard puncher, as his 12 knockouts in 28 fights make clear. Perhaps the feeling then is that he simply won't be able to keep the relentless Pacquiao off him and so the risk youth always presents to a 33-year-old champion with a lot of wear and tear on him is mitigated. Whatever their reasoning, Tim Bradley is glad for it.

"Opportunity only comes once," Bradley said. "This is my shot but it's just one of my dreams. I set goals, and when I accomplish them I set a new goal. I wanted to be a champion. I am. Then I wanted to be Top 10 pound-for-pound. I'm No. 9. Now my goal is to be No. 1 pound for pound. This is my shot at that. After this I want to become a legendary fighter.

"I'm happy at the way things worked out. I'm happy at the moves we made that led us to getting a shot at the No. 1 guy. I was



**Tim Bradley** is ecstatic that he has the opportunity to fight **Manny Pacquiao**. Now it's down to business.

Image: **Chris Cozzone**

in with a lot of top guys at 140 who were supposed to beat me, and I beat them all. So here we go again.

"Manny's opposition has been strong guys, but I can do things in there those other fighters can't do. Styles make fights, and he struggled with (Juan Manuel) Marquez three times. Marquez is a counter puncher. So am I but I'm a more aggressive guy. I have my own style. I can pretty much do it all in the ring. I can pressure or I can counter. You can't prepare for me one way."

However Pacquaio prepares, he can't prepare for the boldness of youth. As a fight fan, Tim Bradley wanted to see Pacquiao-Mayweather as much as the next fellow but no more.

He realizes and accepts that he's widely seen as merely a place holder, a substitute for what fans really want. He is, the public thinks, a fighter getting his opportunity as a result of two multi-millionaires being unable to find an agreeable way to divide the biggest payday in boxing history and little more.

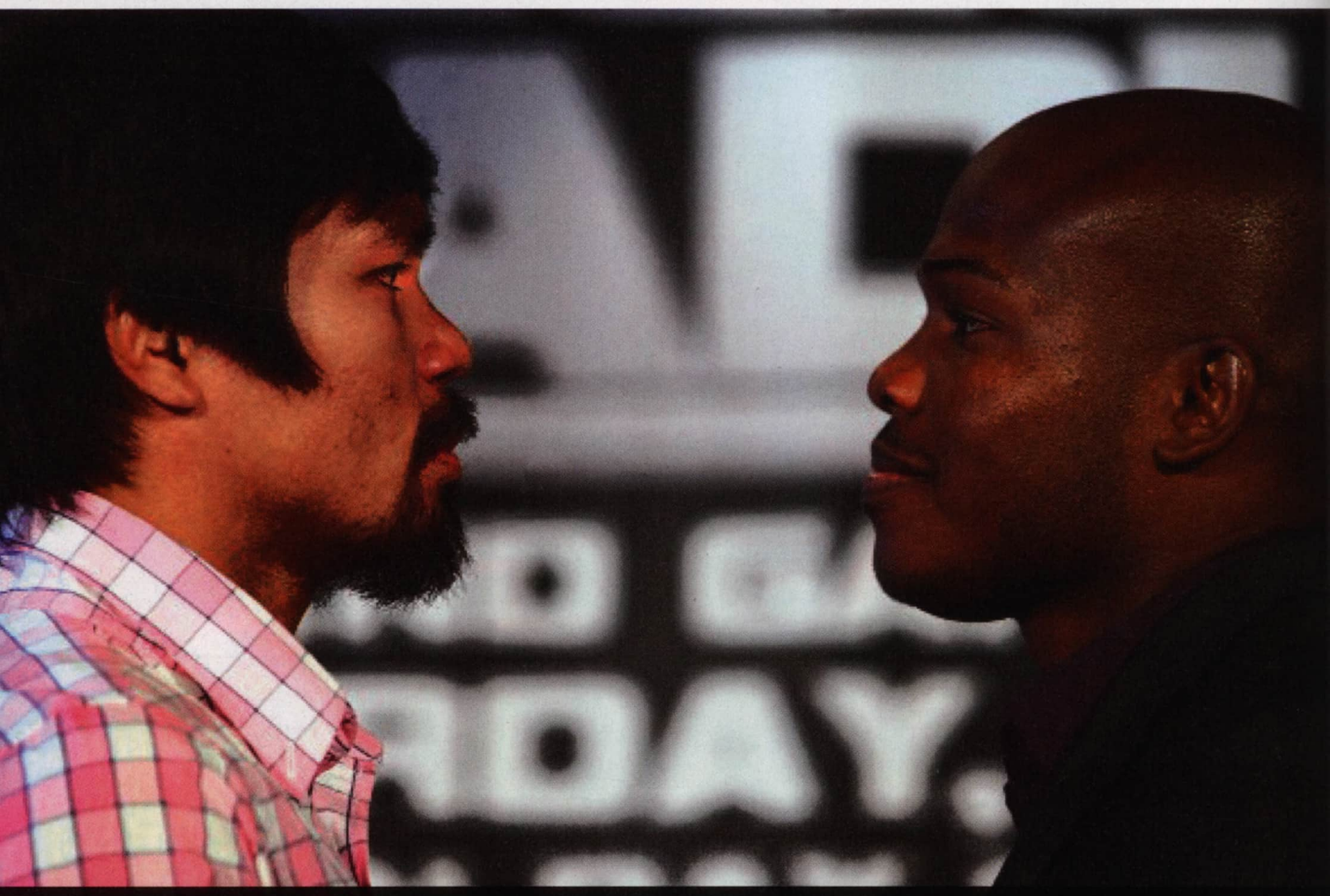
Boxing is the only sport unable to consistently put on its biggest events but at times because of that fractured business model it leads to what Tim Bradley believes is inevitable on June 9. It leads to the world of boxing going upside down.

"Of course everybody wants to see Mayweather-Pacquiao fight," Bradley said. "I'd love to see it too, but I don't think it will happen. Not after what happens June 9.

"Fans won't be upset with this fight. On June 9, Tim Bradley will put it all on the line. It makes me mad when I hear people saying I got no chance.

"I know what they're going to do. He'll look to make me fight early but I think he'll be shocked after the first couple of rounds. I honestly do."

If he is, Manny Pacquiao won't be alone, but Tim Bradley won't be surprised at all. ■



**Manny Pacquiao** (left) topped opponent **Tim Bradley** in 12 of 20 key categories. Image: **Chris Farina-Top Rank.**

# HEAD TO HEAD

## A COMPARISON OF MANNY PACQUIAO AND TIM BRADLEY IN 20 KEY CATEGORIES. PACQUIAO AND BRADLEY FIGHT JUNE 9 AT THE MGM GRAND IN LAS VEGAS ON PAY-PER-VIEW TELEVISION.

By **Doug Fischer**

For the first time in many years members of the boxing community believe that Manny Pacquiao is going into a fight that he can lose. Oddsmakers haven't made the future hall of famer an underdog since he rose from lightweight to welterweight to challenge Oscar De La Hoya in December 2008, and they haven't done so for his WBO welterweight title defense against Timothy Bradley on June 9.

However, more than a few boxing writers are predicting an upset.

Why? For starters, Pacquiao finally appears to be slowing down – an inevitable occurrence given the Filipino icon's ambitious schedule in recent years (fought at an unnaturally heavy weight), his advancing age and the general wear and tear on his body from more than 50 pro fights. Many believe he was lucky to get the nod against archrival Juan Manuel Marquez last November.

The fight scribes' willingness to back a near-3-to-1 underdog isn't just about Pacquiao's perceived burn out, though. It's also the result of the tremendous re-

spect they have for Bradley, an undefeated three-time junior welterweight titleholder who has faced the best of his division. The 28-year-old Californian has twice unified the WBC and WBO 140-pound belts – against Kendall Holt and Devon Alexander – and also has impressive victories over current titleholders Lamont Peterson and Miguel Vazquez.

Are the pundits correct in predicting Pacquiao's last stand? How much has the Filipino hero slowed down (if at all)? How good is Bradley? This feature seeks to answer those questions.

Here's how Pacquiao and Bradley match up in 20 categories, both physical and intangible, with each fighter rated on a scale of 0 to 5. (A score of 100 would denote the perfect fighter.)

### HAND SPEED

Bradley is one of the quickest junior welterweights in the world, and most presume he will carry his hand and foot speed to welterweight. However, Pacquiao's blinding speed can only be described as "otherworldly" – or more accurately, "feather-weightly" – because the dynamic southpaw brought the quickness and reflexes of a 126-pounder to the 147-pound division. He moves too fast for most opponents to react to or cope with.

**PACQUIAO 5.0 / BRADLEY 4.5**

### FOOTWORK

Both fighters have excellent footwork, which is essential for their aggressive, frenetic boxing styles. Pacquiao, who often throws opponents off balance with his uncanny ability to stop and change direction in mid-charge, appears more agile and coordinated than Bradley. The unbeaten American uses lateral movement to neutralize aggressive opponents (as he did with Peterson) or nimble pressure to smother mobile boxers (as he did against Holt and Alexander), but sometimes he stumbles when charging forward.

**PACQUIAO 4.5 / BRADLEY 4.0**

### POWER (LEAD HAND)

Pacquiao's right hand isn't the "finisher" that his vaunted left is, but it's still a powerful tool that he uses in a variety of ways – a shotgun jab, a dangerous hook, a sneaky counter punch or a debilitating right to the body. Bradley has an educated jab, solid hook and a mean left to the body, but he generally doesn't hurt his opponents with his left, which is used primarily to set up his right.

**PACQUIAO 4.5 / BRADLEY 4.0**

### POWER (TRAIL HAND)

Pacquiao's left hand is arguably boxing's most celebrated power punch since Felix Trinidad's hook or perhaps even the straight right of Thomas Hearns. He launches his straight left with supreme confidence and it usually causes severe – if not fight-ending – damage when it hits its target. Bradley's right is his primary weapon and he commits to it (especially when he throws his overhand punch). He also counters well with the punch, which is responsible for most of the knockdowns he's scored.

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 4.0**

### JAB

Pacquiao has a crisp, stinging jab that he can control a fight with if he commits to his it, but he seldom does (opting instead to lead with lightning-quick power shots). However, his jab was a key to his victories over David Diaz and Oscar De La Hoya.

Bradley has a busy and well-timed jab that disrupts the rhythm of his opponents and sets up power punches.

**PACQUIAO 4.0 / BRADLEY 4.0**

### HOOK

"Manila Ice" (the PR-inspired nickname for Pacquiao's hook) never lived up to its hype but the punch was effective enough to drop Ricky Hatton (the first knockdown in the first round) and Miguel Cotto (in the third round) and even stun the much-bigger, iron-chinned Antonio Margarito (in the 10th round). Bradley goes to the body well with his hook but he doesn't turn it over much when he aims for the head. Thus, the punch doesn't do as much damage as his right.

**PACQUIAO 4.5/ BRADLEY 4.0**

### CROSS/UPPERCUT

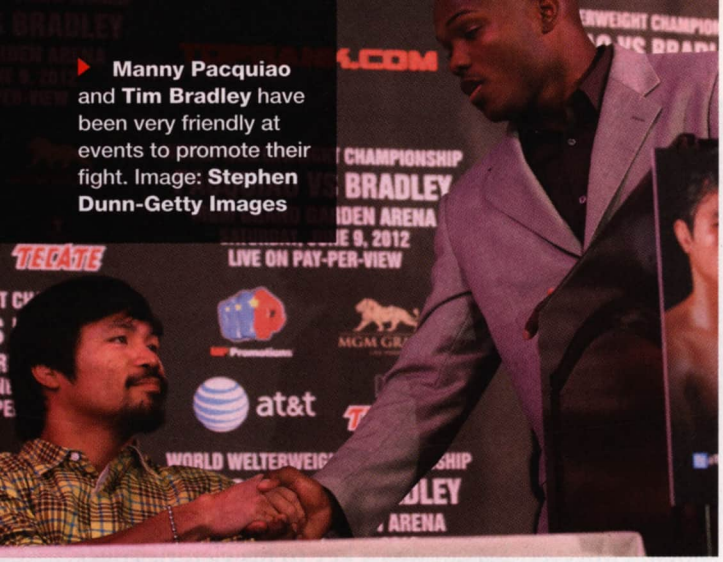
Pacquiao's signature punch is his left cross, which is responsible for most of the 38 knockouts he's scored. It has produced some of the most dramatic highlights – such as the three first-round knockdowns scored in the first Marquez fight and the chilling second-round KO of Hatton – in recent memory. Bradley's best punch is his right cross, which he used to drop Junior Witter, Peterson and Edner Cherry.

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 4.5**

### BODYPUNCHING

Both fighters like to get in close and work the bodies of their opponents. Pacquiao's more precise body shots do more damage than Bradley's, but the Southern Californian has a more consistent body attack and does a better job of mixing body punches in with his combinations.

**PACQUIAO 4.0/ BRADLEY 4.0**




Manny Pacquiao and **Tim Bradley** have been very friendly at events to promote their fight. Image: **Stephen Dunn-Getty Images**

### INFIGHTING SKILLS

Both are at home fighting in close. It's not uncommon for Pacquiao or Bradley to unleash four- and five-punch combinations once inside the reach of their opponents. Both routinely outhustle taller, rangier boxers on the inside, as Pacquiao did with De La Hoya and Bradley did against Peterson and Luis Abregu.

**PACQUIAO 4.0/ BRADLEY 4.0**

### ATHLETICISM

Only a handful of elite fighters (Floyd Mayweather, Nonito Donaire, Sergio Martinez and Wladimir Klitschko) can match or even come close to overall athleticism that Pacquiao and Bradley are blessed with. Both men possess superb hand-eye coordination, balance and reflexes. Bradley – the naturally bigger of the two – is physically stronger, but Pacquiao wields more raw speed and power.

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 4.5**

### ENDURANCE

The fanatical training, natural athleticism and warrior mentalities of both Pacquiao and Bradley combine to make them near-tireless fighters in the ring. Pacquiao's vast experience adds to his freakish endurance. Bradley, the more disciplined athlete between fights, can thank his uncommon dedication to the sport for his elite-level stamina.

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 5.0**

### ABILITY TO SLIP AND BLOCK PUNCHES

Both fighters are occasionally caught because of their busy, aggressive styles but they also manage to avoid many punches by using their legs and upper-body movement. Pacquiao likes to block punches with his high guard, which limits his ability to slip shots from the outside. However, he does a good job of sliding under punches when in close. Bradley does a better job of bobbing and weaving than Pacquiao, and he's also adept at blocking and parrying punches.

**PACQUIAO 4.0/ BRADLEY 4.0**

### PHYSICAL CONDITION

These are two of the best prepared boxers in the sport. Both men give 100 percent in every area of their training – sparring, mitt and bag work, floor exercises, roadwork and track workouts. Only Mayweather can claim to have a stronger work ethic in the gym, but he doesn't let his hands go as much as Pacquiao and Bradley do on fight night.

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 5.0**

### POISE AND ABILITY TO COPE WITH EXTERNAL PRESSURES

So far, Pacquiao has handled the incredible pressure of being a national hero and worldwide celebrity very well. He's also done a good job of juggling his many endeavors, including political office in his native Philippines, but rumor has it that recent strife in his personal life contributed to his sub-par showing in the third bout with Marquez. Bradley doesn't have to deal with the trappings of fame, but he's a humble individual who would probably handle celebrity at least as well as Pacquiao does. His arrow-straight personality keeps him grounded and free from distractions.

**PACQUIAO 4.5/ BRADLEY 4.5**

### KILLER INSTINCT

Bradley is aggressive by nature and he will swarm opponents whenever he has the offensive advantage, but he generally won't stay on top of them long enough to score a knockout. Pacquiao, on the other hand, has the power and the will to end matters with any opponent brave enough to take the fight to him. However, he won't go for the knockout if his opponent is blatantly trying to avoid confrontation (as Shane Mosley and Cotto did during the mid-to-late rounds their fights).

**PACQUIAO 4.5/ BRADLEY 3.5**

### INTELLIGENCE AND STRATEGIC DEXTERITY

Pacquiao follows strategy well and is able to think on his feet to an extent but doesn't have a great track record of making adjustments in difficult fights, such as the first Morales bout and his trilogy with Marquez. Bradley, a bright and articulate man outside of the ring, seems to make the right decisions and moves at the right times in all of his big fights.

**PACQUIAO 4.0/ BRADLEY 4.5**

### CHIN AND RESILIENCE

Pacquiao suffered two third-round KOs during his flyweight days in the 1990s, but those stoppages were more the result of weight drain than an inability to take a punch. He has boasted a reliable chin over seven weight classes since 2000. Bradley also sports solid whiskers. He's only been down twice since turning pro in 2004, both times during his fight with Holt. Bradley went down hard in the first round with the fast counter puncher but he recovered quickly.

**PACQUIAO 4.5/ BRADLEY 4.0**

### EXPERIENCE

Pacquiao, who has boxed more than 350 rounds in 59 pro bouts, is by far the more experienced fighter. Bradley, who had more than 100 amateur bouts, has logged 194 rounds in 29 pro fights.

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 4.0**

### QUALITY OF OPPONENTS

Bradley has fought very good opposition, including seven major titleholders. Pacquiao has fought great opposition, including seven fighters who will likely be inducted into the Hall of Fame (De La Hoya, Mosley, Marquez, Barrera, Morales, Cotto and Hatton).

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 4.5**

### CORNER

Pacquiao has been guided by the most respected and accomplished trainer of the last decade, recent Hall of Fame inductee Freddie Roach, since his U.S. debut in 2001. Bradley's trainer, Joel Diaz, an ex-pro who hails from a boxing family (his younger brothers are former lightweight titleholder Julio Diaz and former 140-pound contender Antonio Diaz) has developed into one of the sport's better young coaches, but he's a few decades away from equaling Roach's experience and knowledge.

**PACQUIAO 5.0/ BRADLEY 4.0**

### SUMMARY AND PREDICTION

Bradley is a well-rounded boxer with a sharp mind, strong body and solid technique. He possesses considerable experience and savvy for a 28-year-old pro with fewer than 30 fights. Only a once-in-lifetime talent such as Pacquiao can top him in 12 of the 20 categories. Still, the Palm Springs native has youth and desire on his side. The fight won't be easy or pretty for Pacquiao, who will struggle with Bradley's in-and-out attack, counter-punching ability and considerable physical strength. However, the Filipino legend's explosive edge in speed and power will eventually overwhelm the game challenger to a late-rounds stoppage. ■

## GRADES AT A GLANCE

| PACQUIAO | | BRADLEY |
|---|---|---|
| 5.0 | HAND SPEED | 4.5 |
| 4.5 | FOOTWORK | 4.0 |
| 4.5 | POWER (LEAD HAND) | 4.0 |
| 5.0 | POWER (TRAIL HAND) | 4.0 |
| 4.0 | JAB | 4.0 |
| 4.5 | HOOK | 4.0 |
| 5.0 | CROSS/UPPERCUT | 4.5 |
| 4.0 | BODY PUNCHING | 4.0 |
| 4.0 | INFIGHTING SKILLS | 4.0 |
| 5.0 | ATHLETICISM | 4.5 |
| 5.0 | ENDURANCE | 5.0 |
| 4.0 | ABILITY TO SLIP / BLOCK PUNCHES | 4.0 |
| 5.0 | PHYSICAL CONDITION | 5.0 |
| 4.5 | POISE / ABILITY TO COPE W/ EXTERNAL PRESSURES | 4.5 |
| 4.5 | KILLER INSTINCT | 3.5 |
| 4.0 | INTELLIGENCE / STRATEGIC DEXTERITY | 4.5 |
| 4.5 | CHIN / RESILIENCE | 4.0 |
| 5.0 | EXPERIENCE | 4.0 |
| 5.0 | QUALITY OF OPPONENTS | 4.5 |
| 5.0 | CORNER | 4.0 |
| 92 | TOTAL | 84.5 |

**SCAN THIS QR CODE FOR MORE ON PACQUIAO AND BRADLEY AT RINGTV.COM.**

COMPILED BY **MIKE COPPINGER**

In the end, **Erik Morales** couldn't stand up to the youth and ability of **Danny Garcia**. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

## DANNY GARCIA UD 12
## ERIK MORALES

**DATE:** MARCH 24, 2012
**SITE:** RELIANT ARENA, HOUSTON
**DIVISION:** JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT
**WEIGHTS:** GARCIA 139½; MORALES 140
**RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT):** MORALES NO. 5; GARCIA NO. 7
**NETWORK:** HBO

Erik Morales had just enough left in his battle-worn body to compete with Danny Garcia in the early rounds of their fight, but he faded in the middle rounds and suffered a hard knockdown in the 11thround on his way to losing a one-sided unanimous decision.

Scores were 118-109, 117-110 and 116-112 for Garcia.

The 35-year-old Mexican legend out-jabbed Garcia in the early rounds, but he admits that he wasn't active enough over the second half of the bout and deserved to lose.

However, Morales (52-8, 36 knockouts) blamed his inability to take over the bout on his age as opposed to anything Garcia (23-0, 14 KOs) did.

"With all due respect, Danny is a good, strong, young fighter, but he's not a great fighter," said Morales, who was stripped of his WBC title when he weighed in at 142 pounds. (Garcia and his team) were laughing at me at the weigh-in because I was a little bit chubby. But when I was his age, the old veterans weren't competitive with me. I was competitive with him. He didn't dominate me.

"He won the fight but I fought with dignity, with a lot of pride. I put on a good performance, so I'm not sad."

There's no reason for Morales to be disappointed. He got the most out of a body that was physically burnt out years ago. He competed with a 24-year-old contender with speed and power on sheer guts, experience and muscle memory. If Morales had just a little bit of the athleticism that served him so well during his prime, he could have pulled off one last ring miracle. As it was, he bloodied and lumped up the young man's face.

But Morales couldn't do more than that. His legs had no spring. His reflexes were shot, and his body looked deflated, almost like a half-empty heavy bag. He wasn't able to hurt Garcia or take advantage of the Philadelphia native's careful counter-punching style and willingness to fight at the older man's pace.

Garcia, to his credit, acknowledged the skill and ability of the future hall of famer.

"He has a great jab," said Garcia, who is advised by Al Haymon. "He busted me up with it. It was hard

to throw more punches because he was crafty when he was on the ropes. He wasn't easy to hit and I didn't want to get too greedy when I did hit him. He never hurt me but he hit me with some good shots.

"I'm just happy my dream came true and that I went 12 rounds with a legend."

*–Doug Fischer*

## ZAB JUDAH TKO 9 VERNON PARIS

**DATE:** MARCH 24, 2012
**SITE:** AVIATOR SPORTS COMPLEX, BROOKLYN, N.Y.
**DIVISION:** JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT
**WEIGHTS:** JUDAH 138; PARIS 138
**RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT):** JUDAH NO. 6; PARIS NO. 10
**NETWORK:** NBC SPORTS NETWORK

Zab Judah once again staved off irrelevancy. He has done it time and again when left for dead in his 15-plus-year boxing career.

Many pundits picked Vernon Paris to defeat Judah and effectively end his career, but the 34-year-old from Brooklyn with nine lives pulled out yet another surprise, dominating Paris en route to a ninth-round TKO.

As the Brooklynite's first professional fight in his native borough, it was a homecoming for Judah and he made the most of it.

Judah (42-7, 29 knockouts) came out firing in the opening stanza, landing some debilitating shots on the 24-year-old from Detroit. He almost had Paris (26-1, 15 KOs) down, but "The Iceman" showed a good chin, bouncing back to land some power shots of his own.

Judah gained confidence, landing shots at will and opening up with three and four punch combinations. Paris looked gassed, mouth agape.

Paris had no jab to speak of, unable to disrupt Judah's rhythm throughout. The sizeable speed advantage coupled with Judah's experience were too much to overcome for Paris.

"Super" Judah hurt Paris several times throughout the bout, nearly knocking him down him several times.

In round nine, the inevitable finish came. Judah stung Paris with a combination, staggering him to the corner. Judah sensed the moment and emptied his clip, unleashing power shots until referee Steve Willis halted the bout at 2:07 of round nine.

"Our game plan was to not get sloppy and unload combinations," said Judah. "I went in there and executed. They call me old, but I respect the old comments — that means longevity to me. I'm getting better. We put together a spectacular plan against a young undefeated fighter."

**Zab Judah** celebrates after stopping **Vernon Paris** in Judah's hometown of Brooklyn, N.Y. Image: **Jayson Colon-FightImages.com**

The win made Judah the mandatory for the IBF champion — the winner of the May 19th match between Amir Khan and Lamont Peterson. Judah would relish the opportunity to exact revenge on Khan or take on his good friend Peterson. There was also talk from Kathy Duva, Judah's promoter, of matching him with Danny Garcia, who was victorious over Erik Morales on the same night.

The win had special meaning for Judah, who was promoted by Don King for years. He was able to put the first blemish on Paris, a Don King-promoted fighter, stating "It was kinda cool to get the old man back for once.

Judah out-landed Paris 123 to 77 in power shots — 61 percent to 34 percent. Two judges had Judah winning every round at the time of the stoppage, while the third judge gave Paris one round.

For Judah, he once again has rejuvenated his career.

*–Mike Coppinger*

**Brandon Rios** (right) never stopped coming in his split-decision victory over **Ricahrd Abril** in April. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

## BRANDON RIOS SD 12
## RICHARD ABRIL

**DATE:** APRIL 14, 2012
**SITE:** MANDALAY BAY, LAS VEGAS
**DIVISION:** LIGHTWEIGHT
**WEIGHTS:** RIOS 137; ABRIL 135
**RING RATING (GOING INTO FIGHT):** RIOS NO. 1; ABRIL UNRANKED
**NETWORK:** PPV

After Yuriorkis Gamboa abruptly and mysteriously withdrew from his highly-anticipated clash with Brandon Rios, in stepped another Cuban in Richard Abril to take his place, thought to be a much easier bout for Rios. Those who thought this would be an easy matchup were wrong.

Abril out-boxed, contained and thoroughly frustrated Rios for 12 rounds, but it was Rios who "earned" a very controversial split-decision victory.

Rios (30-0-1, 23 knockouts) maintained his unbeaten record but his favorable reputation among fans likely took a hit with the undeserved decision he was awarded by judges Jerry Roth and Glenn Trowbridge. Judge Adalaide Byrd saw the fight that most observers thought they witnessed a clear victory for Abril, who won the fight by a 117-111 tally on her scorecard. However, she was overruled by Roth (116-112) and Trowbridge (115-113), who somehow scored the fight for Rios.

An argument could be made for a close decision in favor of Abril (17-3-1, 8 KOs). Rios, who failed to make weight, coming in two pounds over the 135-pound lightweight limit, on Friday, stalked the tall and rangy Cuban in every round and let his heavy hands go whenever he was close to the more technical boxer. Judges often reward forward-marching aggression. However, Rios' aggression was not effective aggression.

The 25-year-old slugger was unable to connect with clean punches even when he was on top of Abril, whose body was always at an angle, chin usually tucked behind his left shoulder, and right hand always up and ready to block and parry Rios' hooks. The 29-year-old Miami resident also employed a lot of holding and often shoved Rios off with his left elbow — illegal tactics that further frustrated the favored fighter.

In a nutshell, Rios couldn't get any quality work done on the inside, which is usually his domain. When the fight was contested from a distance, it was no con-

test. Abril consistently tagged Rios with a long jab and straight right hand while the Southern Californian walked straight forward without working a jab or any head movement.

Rios has faced superior technicians before, such as Anthony Peterson and Miguel Acosta, and prevailed. However, Rios scored those signature victories when he was able to comfortably make 135 pounds. He entered those fights as a slight underdog but he was the much bigger and stronger man on fight night and he used his size and strength to eventually overwhelm them.

Rios, sluggish from his failed battle to make weight, couldn't do that against Abril, who boxed the fight of his career on Saturday and deserved better from the official judges.

*–Doug Fischer*

**DIEGO MAGDALENO TKO 7 FERNANDO BELTRAN JR.**

Top junior lightweight prospect Diego Magdaleno took another step toward title contention, defeating veteran spoiler Fernando Beltran Jr. by seventh-round TKO on March 23 in Tucson, Arizona, the main event of ShoBox: The New Generation.

The 25-year-old from Las Vegas, whose brother Jesse is also a highly-touted prospect, dominated the contest, becoming the first fighter to stop Beltran. Magdaleno (22-0, 8 KOs) dropped Beltran (36-8-1, 20 KOs) with a straight left in the third, but Beltran was not hurt. He dropped him a second time in the seventh with a flurry. Beltran beat the count, but was in bad shape. Magdaleno took advantage and whaled away at the 30-year-old Mexican, forcing Beltran's corner to throw in the towel at 2:28.

The Top Rank-promoted fighter, ranked No. 6 by THE RING at 130, inches closer to a big fight with the victory.

**TOMASZ ADAMEK UD 10 NAGY AGUILERA**

Heavyweight contender Tomasz Adamek (45-2, 28 KOs) began his comeback after his one-sided stoppage loss to Vitali Klitschko in September, dominating journeyman Nagy Aguilera (17-8, 12 KOs) over 10 rounds on March 24 in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Scores were 99-01, 100-90 and 100-90 for the 35-year-old Polish fighter now living in Jersey City, N.J.

Adamek, THE RING's No. 3 heavyweight, landed some great shots but was unable to put Aguilera down. In the fifth round, Adamek, 222 ½, hurt Aguilera, 226 ½, but the 25-year-old Dominican rallied to stop Adamek in his tracks, hurting his foe. Adamek took control of the fight after round five, though, cruising to a unanimous decision.

Adamek hurt both hands badly, putting them on ice long after the bout.

The bout was televised as part of NBC Sports Network's Fight Night boxing series.

**BRYANT JENNINGS TKO 9 SERGEI LIAKHOVICH**

Bryant Jennings authored the biggest win of his short career on March 24 in Brooklyn, N.Y., stopping former heavyweight beltholder Sergei Liakhovich in the ninth round. Jennings (13-0, 6 KOs) was in control from the opening bell, winging power combinations and landing at will on Liakhovich (25-5, 16 KOs).

The 27-year-old Philadelphian opened up nasty gashes over Liakhovich's nose and left eye, making his face a crimson mask. In the ninth round, the 35-year-old from Belarus took a beating, causing referee Eddie Claudio to stop the fight on the advice of the doctor after the conclusion of the round.

Jennings, 219 ½, out-landed Liakhovich, 231, in power shots, 58 percent to 36 percent. Jennings is certainly one of America's best heavyweight prospects now with his second win in 2012, the previous win also coming on NBC Sports Network – a victory over Maurice Byarm in January.

**JEFFREY MATHEBULA SD 12 TAKALANI NDLOVU**

In a rematch of South African junior featherweights, Jeffrey Mathebula (26-3-2, 14 KOs) avenged his September 2010 loss to Takalani Ndlovu (33-7, 18 KOs), winning the IBF title via split decision on March 24 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Scores were 115-111 for Ndlovu, overruled by scores of 117-111 and 116-112 for Mathebula.

Ndlovu, 34, controlled the pace over the first half of the fight, but Mathebula, 32, began to find his mark. Ndlovu faded down the stretch, clearing the way for Mathebula to win the late rounds and the fight.

Mathebula is rated No. 6 by THE RING, while Ndlovu is rated No. 7.

**YOTA SATO UD 12 SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI**

Junior bantamweight Yota Sato (24-2-1, 12 KOs) wrested the WBC title from Suriyan Sor Rungvisai (20-5-1, 7 KOs), dropping the champion twice in the third round en route to a 12 round unanimous decision on March 27 in Tokyo, Japan.

Scores were 114-112, 116-110 and 114-112.

It was the second defense of the title the 23-year-old Thai native won from Tomas Rojas in August 2011.

The bout was fought at a furious pace and the third stanza was thrilling, the two knockdowns the deciding factor on the cards.

Following the victory, Sato, 28, is now rated No. 4 by THE RING, while Rungvisai fell to No. 5.

**Hank Lundy** (right) dominated **Dannie Williams** in March. Image: **Emily Harney**

## HANK LUNDY UD 10 DANNIE WILLIAMS

"Hammerin'" Hank Lundy reeled off another big win on ESPN2's Friday Night Fights, rising off the deck to turn back power-punching lightweight Dannie Williams over 10 rounds at the Foxwoods Resort Theater in Mashantucket, Conn on March 30.

Williams dropped Lundy with a huge left hook that forced Lundy's knee to touch the canvas in the opening round, but it was smooth sailing for Lundy from that moment on, as he won by scores of 98-91, 97-92 and 97-92.

It was the fourth consecutive victory for the 28-year-old Philadelphian since he suffered his first defeat at the hands of John Molina in July 2010.

Lundy (22-1-1, 11 KOs) continually snapped Williams' head back with his strong jab, using the basic punch to control the action in each round.

Williams (21-2, 17 KOs) sought to press Lundy to the ropes, but Lundy countered him nicely, digging powerful left hooks to the midsection of the 27-year-old St. Louis native.

Lundy boxed smarter after suffering the knockdown, giving Williams angles and movement and winning each round with relative ease.

## KELLY PAVLIK TKO 2 AARON JACO

Armed with a fresh trainer and a new place to call home, Kelly Pavlik is once again on the comeback trail, as he looked impressive in dispatching of journeyman Aaron Jaco in two rounds at the Illusions Theater in San Antonio, Texas on March 31.

Pavlik parted ways with long-time trainer Jack Loew, opting to join 2011 RING Magazine trainer of the year Robert Garcia along with relocating to California from Ohio. The pair of moves seemed to have paid early dividends, as the 30-year-old from Youngstown looked fresh coming off a 10-month-plus layoff.

Pavlik (38-2, 33 KOs) dropped Jaco (15-3, 5 KOs) in the opening stanza with a sneaky left hook, forcing Jaco to take a knee. In the second, Pavlik again drilled Jaco with a left hook, the force of the shot knocking the 35-year-old Floridian back and onto the canvas. Jaco beat the count, but had no intentions of continuing and didn't answer referee Jon Schorle when asked if he could continue, ending matters with 45 seconds remaining.

The former RING Magazine middleweight champion competed at super middleweight for this bout, but is open to returning to 160 under the guidance of Garcia. He is slated to return on June 8 against Scott Sigmon in another comeback fight.

## SERGIO THOMPSON TKO 2 JORGE LINARES

In a shocking upset, Mexican Sergio Thompson stopped favorite Jorge Linares in two rounds in Cancun, Mexico on March 31.

The upset foiled plans to pit Linares against Antonio DeMarco in a July 7 Showtime-televised rematch of their scintillating brawl from last year, which Linares lost. With the Venezuelan suffering a second consecutive defeat, where his career goes from here is up in the air.

Thompson (21-2, 19 KOs) and Linares (31-3, 20 KOs) mixed it up in the opening round, with Thompson getting the better of most exchanges, whaling away at the favorite. The hometown fighter couldn't miss his mark as the fans chanted "Mex-i-co" in unison, trying to will Thompson on.

In the second, Linares, 26, sought to establish distance, shooting his jab. But the hard-charging Thompson wasn't dissuaded and found his mark in the final minute of the round. He unleashed and landed everything he threw, punching through Linare's non-existent defense, creating a nasty gash over his left eyelid which squirted blood profusely. He staggered Linares and then dropped him hard with another combination. Linares beat referee Bill Clancy's count, but the fight was stopped due to the cut on the advice of the ringside doctor, the end coming at 2:27.

**Shinsuke Yamanaka** (right) defeated veteran **Vic Darchinyan** handily in April. Image: Toshifumi Kitamura-AFP-Getty Images

**SHINSUKE YAMANAKA UD 12 VIC DARCHINYAN**

Japanese bantamweight Shinsuke Yamanaka (16-0-2, 11 KOs) made the first defense of his WBC title, defeating Vic Darchinyan (37-5-1, 27 KOs) via unanimous decision over 12 rounds on April 6 in his native Tokyo. Scores were 116-112, 117-111 and 116-112.

The first third of the fight was fairly even, with the hard-charging Australian trying to catch the fleet-of-foot Yamanaka. But the 29-year-old beltholder, rated No. 4 by THE RING, came on in the middle rounds, as he stymied Darchinyan, rated No. 8, with his speed and movement.

Matters were made worse for the 36-year-old native of Armenia when a huge gash opened over his right brow in the fifth, a laceration that was worthy of the bout being halted. But referee Hector Afu allowed the it to go on.

Yamanaka badly rocked the challenger in both rounds 10 and 11, but couldn't put his foe down, settling for a points victory.

**FELIX STURM TKO 9 SEBASTIAN ZBIK**

German middleweight Felix Sturm made the 12th successful defense of his WBA title on April 13 in Cologne, Germany, defeating Sebastian Zbik by TKO when Zbik's corner stopped the bout prior to the start of the 10th round.

Zbik (30-2, 10 KOs), also of Germany, started out well, punching through Sturm's trademark high guard over the first three rounds, but began to tire after that. Sturm (37-2-2,16 KOs), 33, took over in the fourth, firing uppercuts as he began to methodically break down the 30-year-old challenger. With Zbik offering little power, Sturm knew he could walk through his punches and increased his work rate, landing at will.

Sturm badly rocked Zbik in the 8th and 9th, and Zbik retired on his stool following the ninth round. It was a big win for Sturm, who drew with Martin Murray his last time out. Zbik suffered his second consecutive defeat, his first pro loss coming last summer to Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.

**JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ UD 12 SERGEI FEDCHENKO**

Three-division champ Juan Manuel Marquez won a major interim belt in a fourth weight class by dominating capable Sergei Fedchenko to a unanimous decision on April 14 in Mexico City.

Marquez (54-6-1, 39 knockouts), who has earned major titles at featherweight, junior lightweight and lightweight, beat Fedchenko by scores of 119-109, 118-110 and 118-110 to win the interim WBO junior welterweight title previously held by the Ukrainian.

Marquez, and a legion of fans, thought he also won the WBO welterweight title in his last bout in November — the third match with Manny Pacquiao — but his arch rival won a controversial majority decision. The 38-year-old veteran bounced back well from that disappointing outcome with a solid but not spectacular performance against Fedchenko, a tall and rangy 31-year-old boxer with good skills.

Marquez, the more aggressive and active of the two technicians, scored with his vaunted left uppercuts, as well as hooks — to the body and head — and right crosses. Fedchnkeo (30-2, 13 KOs) landed his share of jabs and straight rights but he couldn't keep the "old man" at bay.

Marquez pressed a fading Fedchenko in the late rounds and staggered the game Ukrainian in the 12th round. THE RING's lightweight champ is due for a big fight this summer.

*–Doug Fischer*

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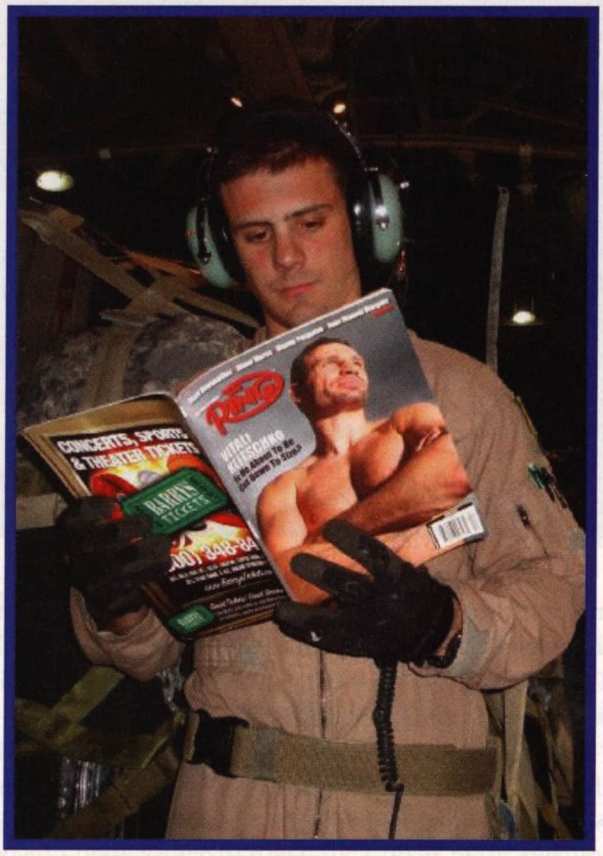

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# FIGHT RESULTS

THROUGH APRIL 15, 2012

## HEAVYWEIGHTS

**TOMASZ ADAMEK W 10** NAGY AGUILERA
**DENIS BOYTSOV W 10** DOMINICK GUINN
**TYSON FURY KO 5** MARTIN ROGAN
**MARIUSZ WACH KO 6** TYE FIELDS
**BRYANT JENNINGS KO 9** SERGEI LIAKHOVICH
**KEVIN JOHNSON KO 9** ALEX LEAPAI
**JAMES TONEY KO 5** BOBBY GUNN
**GEORGE ARIAS KO 1** BRUNO MOREIRA DE OLIVEIRA
**RICHARD TOWERS KO 5** HAROLD SCONIERS
**CARLOS TAKAM KO 11** FRANS BOTHA
**MANUEL CHARR W 12** TARAS BYDENKO
**JOVO PUDAR W 12** MARCELO NASCIMENTO
**CHAUNCY WELLIVER W 10** BERT COOPER

## CRUISERWEIGHTS

**DENIS LEBEDEV KO 2** SHAWN COX
**MATEUSZ MASTERNAK KO 10** FELIPE ROMERO
**GARRETT WILSON KO 12** ANDRES TAYLOR
**ENZO MACCARINELLI W 12** SHANE MCPHILBIN
**VINCENZO ROSSITTO W 12** LEVAN JOMARDASHVILI
**WILLIAM BEZERRA KO 1** DADILSON DOS SANTOS
**NICHOLAS IANNUZZI W 8** DAN BIDDLE

## LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

**EDUARD GUTKNECHT W 12** TONY AVERLANT
**GREGORY SOSZYNSKI W 10** RAYCO SAUNDERS
**TOGASILIMAI LETOA KO 3** MANNY VLAMIS
**DENIS SIMCIC W 12** FATJON MURATI
**JERSON RAVELO W 8** JOE SPINA

## SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

**ARTHUR ABRAHAM W 12** PIOTR WILCZEWSKI
**KELLY PAVLIK KO 2** AARON JACO
**MARCO ANTONIO PERIBAN KO 2** GERARDO DIAZ
**CHRISTOPHER REBRASSE KO 8** HASSENE NEFFATI
**PABLO FARIAS KO 1** JAVIER ANDINO
**ALEXANDER BRAND KO 5** LUZIMAR GONZAGA
**YUZO KIYOTA KO 7** SHINTARO MATSUMOTO
**OMAR SHAICK W 10** FRIDAY NWAIWU
**SCOTT SIGMON W 10** CARLTON HOLLAND

## MIDDLEWEIGHTS

**FELIX STURM KO 9** SEBASTIAN ZBIK
**BILLI GODOY W 10** CARLOS BALDOMIR
**YORY BOY CAMPAS KO 2** MAURO LUCERO
**GILBERTO SANCHEZ W 10** JAIME BARBOZA
**MAKOTO FUCHIGAMI KO 10** KYUNG-SUK KWAK
**PATRICK MAJEWSKI KO 3** ANTWUN ECHOLS
**ANDY KOLLE W 8** MICHAEL WALKER
**(F) CHRISTINA HAMMER W 10** JULIE TSHABALALA
**ELVIN AYALA W 8** ERIC MITCHELL
**JERMELL CHARLO KO 3** CHRIS CHATMAN
**ROGELIO MEDINA KO 1** JOSE PINZON

## JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

**JAMES KIRKLAND DQ 10** CARLOS MOLINA
**LUKAS KONECNY KO 7** SALIM LARBI
**ROBERTO GARCIA W 10** ANTWONE SMITH
**JOEY HERNANDEZ KO 1** SHAKIR ASHANTI
**SERGEY RABCHENKO KO 1** RONNY GABEL
**BRIAN ROSE W 12** MAX MAXWELL
**SAUL ROMAN W 10** RICHARD GUTIERREZ
**ALI NESTOR CHARLES KO 8** MARTIN AVILA
**JEAN MICHEL HAMILCARO KO 11** MARCELO RODRIGUEZ
**BRADLEY PRYCE W 10** PATRICK MENDY
**ELCO GARCIA W 10** ANTONIO MESQUITA
**JAMES DE LA ROSA W 8** TYRONE BRUNSON

## WELTERWEIGHTS

**JAN ZAVECK W 12** BETHEL USHONA
**LEONARD BUNDU KO 5** ANTONIO MOSCATIELLO
**AKINORI WATANABE KO 11** KOSHINMARU SAITO
**DENNIS LAURENTE KO 12** EUSEBIO BALUARTE
**ALAN SANCHEZ KO 1** ARTEMIO REYES
**DANIEL SANDOVAL KO 5** MICHEL ROSALES
**ANTONIO PITALUA KO 8** ALVARO ROBLES
**LIN KINKI KO 6** YO INOUE
**ASLANBEK KOZAEV W 12** ANDREI ABRAMENKA
**OSCAR MEDINA W 12** JUAN BONANNI

## JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

**BRANDON RIOS W 12** RICHARD ABRIL
**DANNY GARCIA W 12** ERIK MORALES
**ZAB JUDAH KO 9** VERNON PARIS
**MIKE ALVARADO W 10** MAURICIO HERRERA
**HUMBERTO SOTO W 10** CLAUDINEI LACERDA
**JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ W 12** SERGEI FEDCHENKO
**NATE CAMPBELL KO 9** VICTOR CAYO
**MERCITO GESTA KO 8** OSCAR CUERO
**(F) FERNANDA ALEGRE W 10** CHRIS NAMUS
**CLAUDIO OLMEDO KO 6** ROSBEL MONTOYA
**MICHELE DI ROCCO KO 1** GIUSEPPE LAURI
**CHRIS ALGIERI KO 3** WINSTON MATHIS

## LIGHTWEIGHTS

**HANK LUNDY W 10** DANNIE WILLIAMS
**SERGIO THOMPSON KO 2** JORGE LINARES
**ALBERT MENSAH W 10** MICHAEL KATSIDIS
**GAVIN REES KO 7** ANTHONY MEZAACHE
**DARLEY PEREZ KO 2** ALAIN HERNANDEZ
**EDNER CHERRY W 10** JUAN CARLOS MARTINEZ
**ALEJANDRO SANABRIA W 10** BALWEG BANGOYAN
**THOMPSON MOKWANA W 12** PATRICK MALINGA
**FELIX LORA W 10** KRZYSZTOF CIESLAK
**ABDIEL RAMIREZ KO 2** ALEJANDRO BARRERA
**EDIS TATLI KO 1** SARFO TYSON

## JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

**TAKAHIRO AO W 12** TERDSAK KOKIETGYM
**DIEGO MAGDALENO KO 7** FERNANDO BELTRAN JR.
**GARY BUCKLAND W 12** PAUL TRUSCOTT
**ROBERTO GONZALES KO 1** DANTE PAULINO
**DANTE JARDON KO 7** BERMAN SANCHEZ
**FERNANDO SAUCEDO W 10** LUIS ARMANDO JUAREZ
**RONNY RIOS W 8** GUILLERMO SANCHEZ

## FEATHERWEIGHTS

**HOZUMI HASEGAWA KO 7** FELIPE CARLOS FELIX
**(F) JELENA MRDJENOVICH KO 1** LINDSAY GARBATT
**HISASHI AMAGASA W 10** NORIYUKI UENO
**CHOI TSEVEENPUREV KO 8** BASTIEN ROZEAUX
**RIKIYA FUKUHARA KO 6** TAKESHI KIMURA
**EVGENY GRADOVICH KO 10** FRANCISCO LEAL
**(F) ELINA TISSEN W 10** DORIS KOEHLER

## JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

**JEFFREY MATHEBULA W 12** TAKALANI NDLOVU
**VICTOR TERRAZAS KO 4** JOSE PALMA
**ALEXANDER BAKHTIN W 12** NEHOMAR CERMENO
**DAIKI KAMEDA KO 2** POMPETCH SOR SOMPONG
**DRIAN FRANCISCO KO 1** PICHITCHAI TWINS GYM
**(F) KATY WILSON CASTILLO W 10** ADA VELEZ
**TATSUYA TAKAHASHI KO 3** TAKENORI OHASHI
**JAYSON VELEZ W 10** JOSE ANGEL BERANZA

## BANTAMWEIGHTS

**SHINSUKE YAMANAKA W 12** VIC DARCHINYAN
**KOKI KAMEDA W 12** NOULDY MANAKANE
**NOBUO NASHIRO KO 6** PETCHKRAPEE SITHSAITHONG
**CHRISTIAN ESQUIVEL W 12** JESUS RUIZ
**AJ BANAL KO 1** RAUL HIDALGO
**HUGO RUIZ KO 8** YONFREZ PAREJO
**PUNGLUANG SOR SINGYU W 12** ELMAR FRANCISCO
**OSCAR ESCANDON KO 2** TADEU ALMEIDA PANTOJA
**PAULUS AMBUNDA W 12** CLEUTUS MBHELE
**SAUL GUTIERREZ W 12** VICTOR MARTINEZ
**MONICO LAURENTE W 12** REY LAS PINAS
**IMMANUEL NAIDJALA KO 6** LWAZI MZOLISA
**TYSON CAVE W 10** JOVANNY SOTO
**KOHEI KONO KO 5** YUSAKU ISHIKAWA
**ARTHUR VILLANUEVA W 8** REY MIGRENO

## JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

**TEPPARITH SINGWANCHA KO 9** TOMONOBU SHIMIZU
**YOTA SATO W 12** SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI
**(F) ANA MARIA TORRES KO 4** MARIA ANDREA MIRANDA
**CARLOS CUADRAS W 10** HUMBERTO MORALES
**DAVID SANCHEZ W 10** JOSE CARLOS VARGAS
**DENKAOSAN KAOVICHIT KO 3** RINO UKRU
**ALBERT PAGARA KO 2** PHUPHA POR NOBNOM
**TEIRU KINOSHITA W 10** GO ONAGA
**PETCH SOR CHITPATTANA KO 8** JEFFREY CERNA

## FLYWEIGHTS

**HERNAN MARQUEZ W 10** RICHIE MEPRANUM
**ROCKY FUENTES KO 6** JAVIER FRANCO
**EDGAR SOSA W 12** WILBERT UICAB
**ARDIN DIALE KO 7** MHAR JHUN MACAHILIG
**(F) AVA KNIGHT KO 10** HONGFAH TOR BUAMAS
**WARS KATSUMATA KO 6** TOMOYA KANESHIRO
**OSCAR BLANQUET KO 9** MARTIN TECUAPETLA
**MYUNG HO LEE TECH. WIN 8** SHO NAKAZAWA
**LOLITO SONSONA KO 5** MARK JOSEPH COSTA
**MUNETSUGU KAYO KO 1** RODEL TEJARES

## JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

**ALBERTO ROSSEL W 12** JOSE ALFREDO RODRIGUEZ
**ARMANDO TORRES KO 2** ERNESTO LEON
**TOMMY SERAN KO 3** MARZON CABILLA
**XIONG ZHAO ZHONG KO 4** GUY-HUN LEE
**YUKI CHINEN KO 1** PETCHTARMEAO CHAIYONGGYM

## STRAWWEIGHTS

**NKOSINATHI JOYI W 12** KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA
**LUIS DE LA ROSA KO 3** DISNEY BENITEZ
**KWANTHAI SITHMORSENG KO 5** DOMI NENOKEBA
**TAKUYA MITAMURA KO 9** TOSHIHIRO NAKASHIMA
**HEKKIE BUDLER W 8** SHAMILA KORTMAN

Former judge **Chuck Giampa** believes that referee **Jon Schorle** acted within the Texas rules when he disqualified **Carlos Molina**, here on one knee after getting knocked down by **James Kirkland**. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

# A CONFUSING DISQUALIFICATION

By: **Chuck Giampa**

I came to the conclusion years ago that you must expect the unexpected. Take the Carlos Molina-James Kirkland fight on March 24 in Houston, for example.

Molina was leading on the cards when he was disqualified in the 10th round because one of his cornermen stepped into the ring while referee Jon Schorle was in the middle of a mandatory eight count.

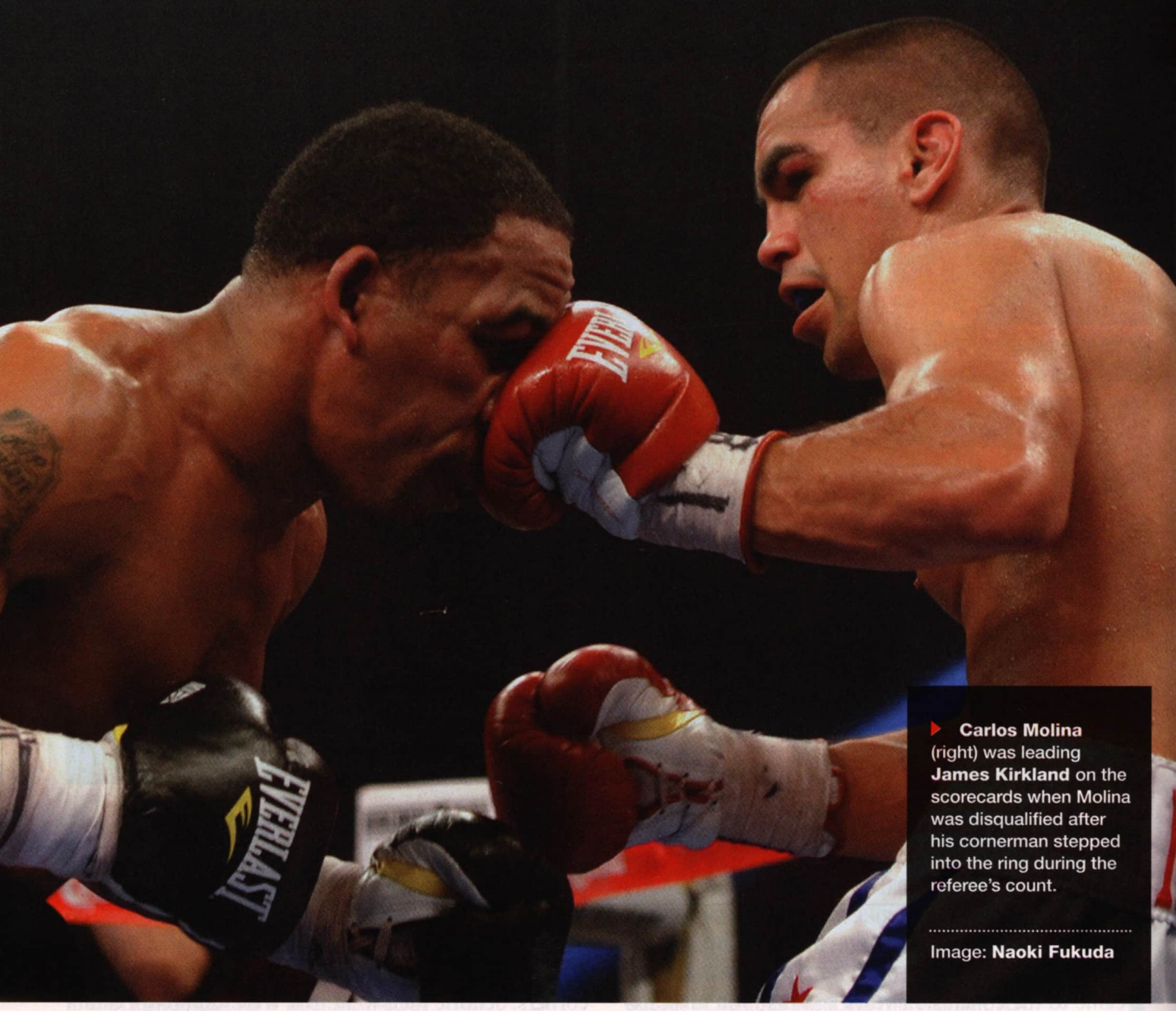
Here is what happened.

## WHAT YOU SAW ON TV

Kirkland knocked down Molina with about one second left in Round 10 and the time keeper rang the bell as Molina hit the canvas. Schorle began his mandatory eight count (not to be confused with a standing eight count). At about the count of five, Molina was up and his cornerman jumped on the apron and tried to get through the ropes assuming the round was over. Schorle correctly stopped his count as he instructed the cornerman to exit the ring. Schorle then continued his count to eight and the fighters went to their respective corners. Schorle then went to a WBC supervisor and a representative of the Texas commission and informed them that he had to disqualify Molina because his cornerman entered the ring before the round was over.

## WHAT YOU DIDN'T SEE ON TV

Schorle said he discussed this precise scenario with the fighters and their handlers before the fight. Said Schorle: "Forty-five minutes prior to the fight, during my instructions to each of the fighters in their dressing rooms, I, along with the WBC supervisor, gave the final instructions to each fighter. The supervisor asked me to explain the rule about disqualifications since he had had a situation recently in another fight that caused a DQ. I explained that if a fighter is down at the end of a round, I have to give a mandatory eight count even if the bell rings. I instructed the cornermen not to get on the apron or in the ring until I finish my mandatory eight count. I asked them if they understood that rule and no questions or comments were made by either




**Carlos Molina** (right) was leading **James Kirkland** on the scorecards when Molina was disqualified after his cornerman stepped into the ring during the referee's count.

Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

camp. When Molina's cornerman entered the ring, I knew what I had to do. So when the fighters went to their corners, I went to the commission table and informed the WBC supervisor and the representative of the Texas commission that I had to DQ Molina based on the DQ rule that we discussed."

## WHAT WENT WRONG

The timekeeper should not have rung the bell until the referee finished the mandatory eight count. Plus, the Texas inspector assigned to the Molina corner should have prevented the cornerman from climbing the steps to enter the ring. And, of course, the cornerman should've known to wait until the count was finished.

## THE RULE IN TEXAS

According to Rule 61.41 of the Texas commission's governing literature, "When a round ends before a contestant who was knocked down rises, the bell shall not ring, and the count shall continue. If the contestant rises before the count of ten, the bell shall ring ending the round.

## CONCLUSION

Schorle acted correctly according to the Texas rules. He specifically explained that rule to each fighter's camp 45 minutes prior to the fight. The bell should not have been rung until Schorle finished his mandatory eight count. The Texas inspector should have prevented the cornerman from even climbing the steps in his corner to enter the ring. And, again, the cornerman should've known better. Everyone involved must know the rules because each has a specific role before, during and after the fight. ■

*Chuck Giampa can be reached at* ***chuckgiampa@aol.com.***

**Jorge Linares** (left, against **Antonio DeMarco**) has been cut badly in consecutive fights. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

# CUTTING YOUR LOSSES

By: **Dr. Margaret Goodman**

Although cuts are an occupational hazard, some fighters are at more risk than others. And, as we know, serious cuts can derail or even destroy a career.

Take Jorge Linares. The Venezuelan fighter lost to relative unknown Sergio Thompson in two rounds when he could no longer fight because of a severe gash above his left eye on April 2, spoiling a planned rematch with WBC lightweight titleholder Antonio DeMarco. That followed an 11th-round TKO loss to DeMarco in which Linares fought with blood gushing from cuts above his nose and right eye.

Oscar De La Hoya, Linares' promoter, Tweeted that his fighter needs better defense. He's right. A successful defense will always protect against any injury. There are other factors that result in cuts, though.

The first is anatomy. A prominent eye socket (bony area surrounding the eye) can increase the likelihood of bleeding when punched. Some fighters have turned to plastic surgeons to shave down and flatten their orbit, although few consider that an acceptable remedy.

Age also plays a role. The skin's outer layer (epidermis) thins as we age and is more susceptible to injury. The subcutaneous fat layer is lost. Connective tissue changes reduce the skin's elasticity and strength. Vessels become fragile and are easily broken, which produces blood collection (hematomas) from minor trauma. Wound healing can take four times as long.

Numerous medications and medical conditions worsen cuts. Anti-inflammatory medications like aspirin, Motrin and Naproxen increase clotting time, which means a cut will bleed longer and contribute to facial swelling – such as a shut eye. Performance-enhancing drugs like anabolic steroids also increase bleeding. Alcohol, even short of excessive intake, produces an increased susceptibility to hemorrhage and over time is destructive to protective skin collagen. High blood

**Israel Vazquez** (pictured after his loss to **Rafael Marquez** in 2010) was susceptible to cuts late in his career. Image: **Naoki Fukuda**

pressure and diabetes worsen cuts and contribute to poor wound healing. Fighters should discuss supplements and over-the-counter and prescription medications with a healthcare professional before taking them during training or before a fight.

A healthy lifestyle can be another crucial safeguard, and boxers can't ignore the role of nutrition. Vitamin-rich fresh fruit and vegetables provide necessary enzymes to boost the immune system. Dark green and orange vegetables contain beta-carotenes that speed up healing. Dairy products, sugar and white flour can slow down tissue regeneration. Vitamin E helps prevent scarring, while Vitamin C, B vitamins and Vitamin A all promote healing and fight infections.

Some boxers bleed because they have been cut in that area before. The fourth fight between Israel Vasquez's and Rafael Marquez, in May 2010, ended when California referee Raul Caiz Jr. called the fight 1:33 into the third round. Vasquez, no stranger to lacerations, had severe cuts above both eyes that obscured his vision. One extended the length of his left eyelid and went down to the bone, requiring three layers of stitches. The 34-year-old Vasquez has not fought since.

Perhaps Vasquez's facial trauma from his previous fights against Marquez never fully healed. Wound healing is a complicated multi-step biochemical process. Minutes after the injury, platelets migrate to form a clot that controls bleeding. Bacteria and debris are destroyed as cells participate in a "proliferative" or new growth phase. Here, new blood vessels form, collagen is deposited and the epidermis regenerates. Within three months of the original injury, a cut will be 50 percent as strong as normal tissue. Eventually it reaches 80 percent, but this can take up to a year.

Scar tissue may predispose the surrounding tissue to tearing. Occasionally a fighter has turned to experimental plastic surgery procedures that remove and replace the scarring with cadaver collagen – all in an attempt to cut down on bleeding.

Once a cut exists, the way it is handled during a fight can determine the outcome. An unprepared cutman has cost more boxers victories than any left hand as too often boxers or their trainers skimp on filling the position. Ringside treatment isn't magic, but I would not judge a cutman by how many Q-tips he can hang from his mouth or lump Vaseline on his arm. I would choose someone experienced, quick and calm.

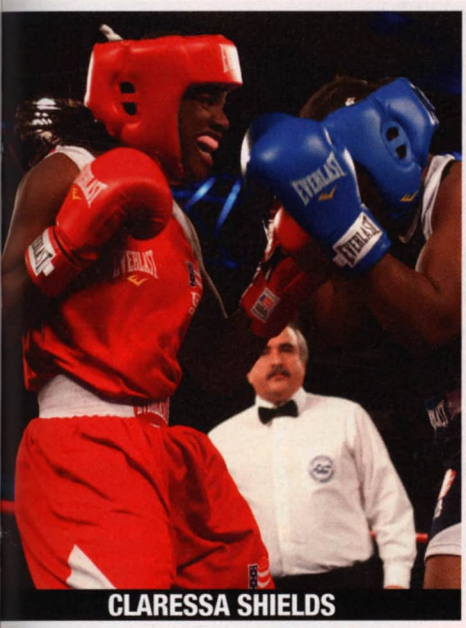
Beyond a basic understanding of anatomy, a cutman should know answers to the following: Has my fighter been cut before? How has he reacted to his own blood? Has he sustained cuts, bruises or facial swelling during training? And if so, have these injuries had time to heal?

The key to stopping bleeding is pressure. A cutman who wastes 30 seconds of the one-minute rest period climbing between the ring ropes has already lost the battle. The trainer can give instructions from the side, but the cutman needs to be in the ring in front of the boxer to adequately treat a cut or facial swelling. Firm, continuous pressure will begin the process.

Cold remains the best natural way to restrict bleeding by narrowing vessels. An enswell is a small piece a metal with a handle. It should be kept on ice and directly applied to a cut or facial swelling to decrease blood flow.

Cutmen are permitted to use three medications ringside: adrenaline, Avetine and thrombin. Adrenaline (epinephrine) is a naturally occurring substance that when applied to open skin decreases blood flow. Avetine causes platelets to adhere to active bleeding and form a clot. Thrombin will also form a clot if the surface is dry and there is no active bleeding. A trained cutman should know when to use each. Their drugs should be fresh, sterile and the bottle never used on more than one fighter. Old substances are less effective. If not sterile, a boxer may develop an infection that could hinder healing.

Protecting a boxer from cuts happens before he steps in the ring, and a fighter has more control over his fate than he recognizes. I understand it's the last thing he wants is to focus on. However, familiarizing himself with preventing cuts, treating facial swelling and how to recognize a trained cutman may help him win fights. ■


CLARESSA SHIELDS

MARLEN ESPARZA

QUEEN UNDERWOOD

# MEET THE U.S. TEAM

By: **David A. Avila** / Images: **USA Boxing**

No matter how Queen Underwood, Marlen Esparza and Claressa Shields fare in the Olympics this summer, they'll always have one distinction: They will be the first American women to box in any Games.

Women's boxing will make its debut in London after decades of behind-the-scenes lobbying finally paid off.

"I was so happy," said an emotional Underwood, the current U.S. lightweight national champion. "It finally happened this time."

We'll get to know these women in the lead up to the Games. Here's an introduction.

## CLARESSA SHIELDS

Shields, a 17-year-old middleweight, is the youngest of the trio but expresses no surprise that she is a member of the team headed for the United Kingdom.

"Is there a better word than confident? Because that's what I am," said Shields, who was raised in Flint, Mich. "Other people say they're confident, then they lose. I say I'm going to win and I do. So there must be a better word."

Yes, Shields believes in herself. And no wonder. She blasted her way through the Olympic Trials with a potent blend of speed and power. On the way she toppled the favorite Franchon Crews and now represents her country in the 165-pound weight class.

She acknowledged that she was a bit overwhelmed by the attention she received.

"I was all geeked up because the New York Times and all of the cameras came to see me," Shields said of her run through the Trials. "Me being so geeked up, I was just so tired. I learned from that. I have to stay relaxed."

Shields was inspired by her father, a former boxer, and Laila Ali. She said that combination led her to boxing. And now she has the chance to make her own mark in a big way.

Of course, she believes she'll succeed.

"When I get in there and smash those girls, they're going to be surprised," she said.

## MARLEN ESPARZA

Esparza, a flyweight from Houston, said her love of boxing started while watching fights on television with her father.

"When I was little, about 9, we would watch boxing," said Esparza, 22. "I'm Mexican and it was Julio Cesar Chavez's era fighting all the time and beating everybody. It's been a big part of my life since I could remember, and I kind of went from there."

Esparza has a great deal of experience both domestically and internationally.

She understands that amateur boxing in the U.S. is different from competing in an international competition like the Olympics.

"In the states we fight more professionally, with more power punching than slapping, versus the international style which is in and out, lateral movement

and a lot of bouncing. Everything is about being quick (in international boxing)," Esparza said.

"It's not about being first, it's about countering. It's kind of like the opposite kind of fighting. In the U.S. you stay flat and hit with power. Outside the U.S. you try to bounce and be quick."

Esparza knows she faces a significant challenge.

"I've been fighting internationally since I was 16," she said. "I made the U.S. team when I was 16. I'm extremely familiar with the majority of the girls, especially the very good ones. Everybody is just as good as me. I have to make sure everything is in line. There are certain things I can get away with in the U.S. but not internationally."

Esparza revels in the fact she is part of women's boxing history.

"I feel like the luckiest woman in the world to be in the right time and the right era," she said. "The first is always the most important. First impressions are extremely important. People will be surprised by the talent. I promise you."

## QUEEN UNDERWOOD

Underwood, a five-time U.S. national champion who now fights at lightweight, survived trying amateur wars as younger girls appeared on the amateur scene eager to wrest her spot. She said she had a physically and mentally fatiguing five-year period.

"I'm very excited because I had been sticking around and lots of people tried to take the title from me," said Underwood, a 27-year-old from Seattle. "I made so many changes and sacrifices to get here and chase my dream. I definitely gambled it all to get here."

Underwood remained an amateur as others around her age turned pro or departed to begin their lives outside of sports. She remained steadfast in her belief that women's boxing would be accepted as an Olympic sport ... some day.

Now that it has happened, Underwood and her teammates hope to prove they're worthy.

"This is the year that counts," Underwood said. "There is only one Olympics."

## AROUND THE WORLD

WBC junior bantamweight champion **Ana Maria Torres** (28-3-3, 16 knockouts) retained her title by stopping Maria Miranda (14-8) on March 31 in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. The end came 10 seconds into the fourth round. ...

**Ju Hee Him** (16-1-1, 6 KOs) kept the GBU junior flyweight world title by knockout against Ploynapa Sakrungrueng (5-2) on March 30 in Seoul. The stoppage came at the end of round six. ...

**Katy Castillo** (15-1, 9 KOs) captured the IBF junior featherweight world title by unanimous decision over 41-year-old Ada Velez (20-4-3, 6 KOs) on March 24 in Castillo's home town of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. On the same card, IBF featherweight titleholder Dahiana Santana (29-6, 13 KOs) stopped replacement challenger Diana Garcia (12-16, 3 KOs) two minutes into the second round to retain her title. ...

Germany's **Elina Tissen** (14-2, 6 KOs) easily outpointed Doris Koehler (8-10-1, 3 KOs) over 10 rounds to retain her GBU featherweight title March 24 in Munster. ...

And, in a battle of Canadian lightweights, **Jelena Mrdjenovich** (27-8-1, 14 KOs) stopped **Lindsay Garbatt** (7-5-1) at 1:45 of the first round to win the vacant WBC featherweight title March 24 in Edmonton. ■

▶ **Queen Underwood** will bring plenty of ammunition to the London Olympics. Image: **USA Boxing**

Junior flyweight **David Ayrapetyan** (right) will be taking part in his second Olympic Games for Russia. Image: **Alberto Pizzoli-AFP-Getty Images**

# THE ROAD TO LONDON

**THE RING WILL TAKE A LOOK AT THE OLYMPIC TEAM OF ONE NATION EACH ISSUE. THIS MONTH: RUSSIA**

By: **Norm Frauenheim**

The Russians have continued to succeed in Olympic boxing after the fall of the Soviet Union. Here are the countries with the most medals in the past four Games (1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008):

| COUNTRY | GOLD | SILVER | BRONZE | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CUBA | 13 | 9 | 7 | 29 |
| RUSSIA | 8 | 3 | 9 | 20 |
| KAZAKHSTAN | 5 | 4 | 4 | 13 |
| U.S. | 2 | 2 | 9 | 13 |
| THAILAND | 4 | 2 | 3 | 9 |
| UKRAINE | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 |
| GERMANY | 0 | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| FRANCE | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| UZBEKISTAN | 1 | 0 | 5 | 6 |

The cliché is Ivan Drago, the cartoon-like character who plays an Olympic gold medalist fated to fail in *Rocky IV*. The reality is something else, something serious. The Russians are more of a force in Olympic boxing today than they were when they marched under the hammer-and-sickle and collected more medals than a Red Army general could pin onto his chest.

In nine Olympics from 1952 through 1988, when the Russians were the ruling face of a team that included Ukrainians and Kazakhstanis, the Soviet Union won 53 boxing medals. The Soviet Union is gone but remains third in the overall count behind the United States with 190 medals and Cuba with 63.

When the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and the Soviet Union followed in 1991, the guess was that Russian boxers would soon fall out of medal contention. But they are still there, in the count and on the pedestal. They have outlived the empire. Over the last four Olympics – Atlanta in 1996, Sydney in 2000, Athens in 2004 and Beijing in 2008, Russian boxers have accounted for the second-most medals, 20, behind Cuba with 29. Going into the 2012 London Games, Russia's eight gold over the last four Olympiads also stands second to Cuba's 13.

The United States? For the Americans, it's been easier to win the Cold War than the gold. From Atlanta

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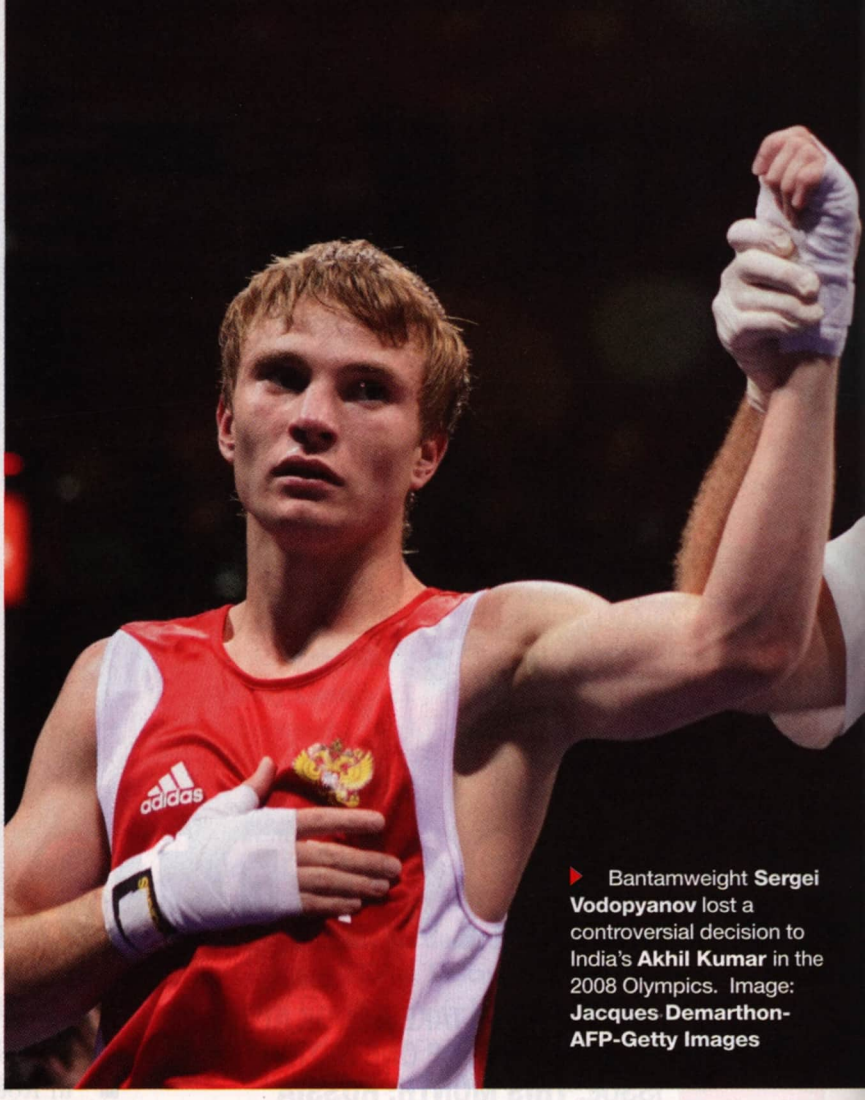

Bantamweight **Sergei Vodopyanov** lost a controversial decision to India's **Akhil Kumar** in the 2008 Olympics. Image: **Jacques Demarthon-AFP-Getty Images**

through Beijing, the U.S. has slipped to third in total medals with 14 and to fifth in gold with only two – David Reid in 1996 and Andre Ward in 2004 – behind Kazakhstan's five and Thailand's three.

Russia's ability to sustain the success of the bygone Soviet system isn't a surprise to some who experienced it.

"No, not at all," said Vassiliy Jirov, a former cruiserweight champion who began boxing in the Soviet Union and went on to upset American favorite Antonio Tarver to win gold for his native Kazakhstan in 1996. "There was always a lot of discipline in the training. I remember being in camps on the Black Sea. There were no distractions. There was only training. Like everybody else, I was in the Red Army. We only trained and competed.

"I can't really say what they're doing now. But I'm sure that the discipline and a lot of the old organization is still there."

Jirov, now retired and living in Phoenix, is just one who grew up in the Soviet system. He, Kostya Tzsyu, Wladimir Klitschko and brother Vitali survived the bloc's break-up and went on to successful pro careers in the West. Wladimir Klitschko, a heavyweight champion with multiple belts and the son of a major general in the Soviet Air Force, won gold for Ukraine in 1996.

Vitali, who holds the World Boxing Council's version of the heavyweight title, was on Ukraine's 1996 roster. But he never made it to At-

lanta. Vitali disclosed in his 2004 autobiography that he was thrown off the team for steroids. He said he tested positive because of a steroid he had used to treat a leg injury. Wladimir moved from heavyweight into his brother's spot at super heavy.

Tszyu, a junior welterweight inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2011, was on the Soviet team at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul where he was eliminated in a third-round bout. Like Jirov, Tszyu was a soldier in the Red Army. But combat was limited to bouts within the ropes.

"It was a sports army," said Jirov, who was voted winner of the 1996 Val Barker Trophy for being the best boxer at the Atlanta Games.

It's still an army with an effective arsenal, especially in the heavier weights. To wit: Russian Alexander Povetkin, a 2004 gold medalist and the World Boxing Association's heavyweight champion. In Russia, heavyweights are a little bit like a shot of vodka; there's always another one.

Super heavyweight Sergei Kuzmin upset the 2008 gold medalist, Italy's Roberto Cammarelle, in the 2010 European Championships. At 6-4, Kuzmin is known for an ability to put and keep pressure on his opponents. But there are some questions. The 24-year-old Kuzmin was upset at the 2011 World Championships in Azerbaijan by Morocco's Mohamed Arjaoui, who at the Beijing Olympics lost to bronze medalist and America's only medal winner Deontay Wilder.

With more experience and perhaps a better shot at a medal, there is heavyweight Artur Beterbiyev, a native of Chechnya known for his aggressiveness. Beterbiyev is ticketed for his second Olympics. In Beijing, Beterbiyev, then a light heavyweight, won his first bout but lost his second to the eventual gold medalist, China's Zhang Xiaoping, who many argue won a hometown decision over the rival Russian.

## ALSO KEEP AN EYE ON

**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT EGOR MEKHONSTEV** and Beterbiyev have traded weight classes. Mekhonstev won a world amateur title at heavyweight in 2009 but dropped down in weight – from 201 pounds to 178 – to make room for the emerging Beterbiyev. At the new weight, Mekhonstev won bronze at the 2011 World Championships after losing to Cuba's Julio Cesar la Cruz.

**BANTAMWEIGHT SERGEY VODOPYANOV** is going to his second Olympics. In 2008, Vodopyanov was eliminated amid controversy in the Round of 16 by India's Akhil Kumar. The bout ended after four rounds tied 9-9 on the computer-based scorecards. The computer is supposed to count punches. But apparently it missed a few. The judges ruled that Kumar won. They said he landed more punches, but they didn't say how many more.

**FLYWEIGHT MISHA ALOYAN** won a world amateur championship in September with a string of victories that included an upset of American Rau'shee Warren, who will be in London for his third Olympics. Aloyan, who was born in Armenia, also won the 2010 European title.

**JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT DAVID AYRAPETYAN** is also going to his second Olympics, but he is fighting in a division dominated by China's Zou Shiming, the 2008 gold medalist who beat him at the 2007 World Championships in Chicago. Ayrapetyan, also born in Armenia, lost an opening bout in Beijing. He won bronze at the 2011 World Championships. ■

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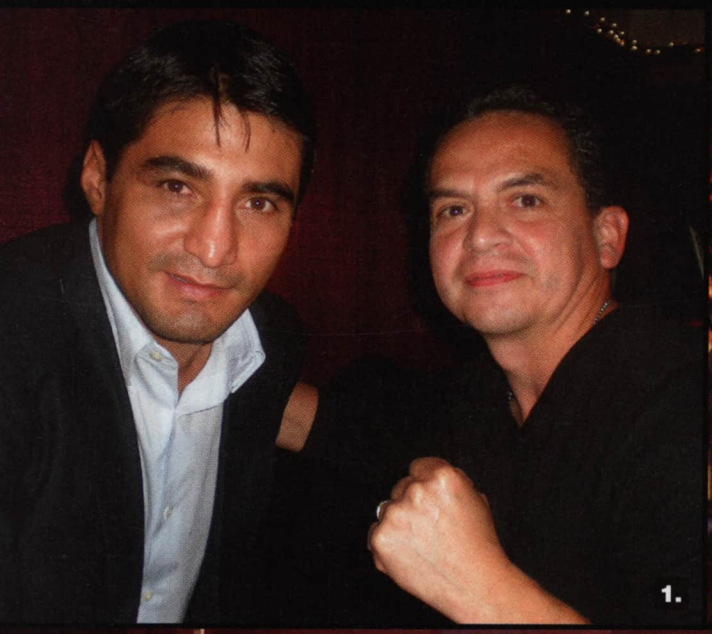
***"Boxers must be part of the equation."***

*— BOC Member José Chegüi Torres*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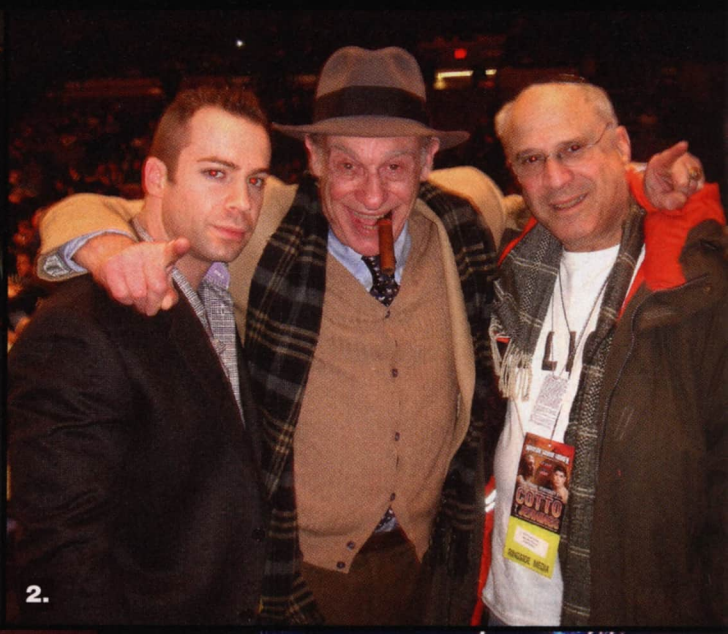
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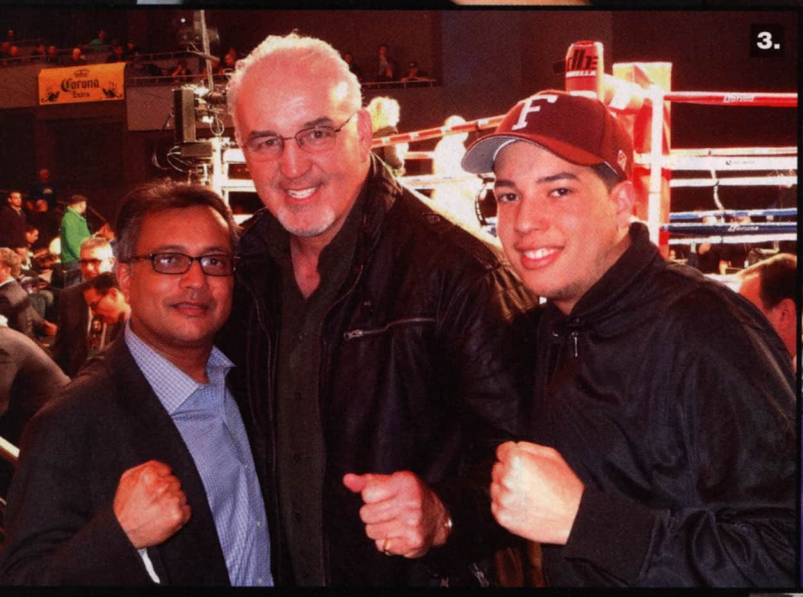
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**1.** Vincent Gardea of Goshen, Ky., with Erik Morales at the 2011 International Boxing Hall of Fame induction ceremonies in Canastota, N.Y. **2.** David (left) and Ron Goldman flank the late, great Bert Sugar in 2009 at Madison Square Garden in New York City. **3.** Hari K. Samaroo (left) and son Rajendra K. Samaroo flank former heavyweight contender Gerry Cooney at the Martinez-Macklin fight in New York. **4.** Karina McCloud with Amir Khan at the Sergio Martinez-Matthew Macklin fight on March 17 at Madison Square Garden. **5.** Donald Wambolt with Juan Manuel Marquez at a promotional event for the Manny Pacquiao-Ricky Hatton fight in 2009.

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